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evangelical VISITOR

January 1986

The drama of "people telling people" continues to add to our excitement of serving the Lord, and to the glory of God as others tell friends and neighbors.



How can we face the future?



by Ruth B. Stoltzfus

The world situation is grim. Nation against nation. Warring mankind preparing for the destruction of others while risking its own destruction. Ghastly poverty and its offspring, crime, increasing while the riches of the rich increase. Many thousands, including little children, starving to death daily. Appalling corruption in governments. Torture of prisoners of conscience in scores of countries. And more. The future is full of fear.

Society's false values surround us and influence us: Obsession with success, money, power, pleasure. For entertainment the people want violence in sports and murder on TV. Human life, born and unborn, is cheap except for one's own self-important life and comfort.

A well-known speaker and writer, Ruth Stoltzfus lives in Harrisonburg, Va.

Material things take priority and relationships suffer desperately. The idols of our time—materialism, nationalism and militarism—are the idols in which church people also trust. God is forsaken by many and justice is forgotten. Yet the wicked prosper.

Our small world of family and friends has its own share of crises: Deep hurts, debilitating disappointments, spiritual defeats, marriage breakups, devastating losses, loneliness, serious handicaps and illnesses, despair, death.

"Lord, don't you see all these situations? Why don't you do anything?" we cry. It is something like the cry of Habakkuk, a prophet of Judah, about six hundred years before Christ. It, too, was the cry of why:

"Lord, I have complained to you many times about the terrible conditions all around. Look at the sins of your backslidden people: unjust treatment of others, fighting, quarreling, bribery, trickery, oppression. The law is weak and in the courts the wicked get the best of the righteous. God, why don't you do anything about this situation?"

The Lord gave the prophet an answer that he said would amaze him. "You will have to see it to believe it," he said. "I am bringing to power a cruel, devouring people, the Babylonians, whose god is their own strength. They are sweeping across the earth to seize lands that are not their own. They collect prisoners like sand."

Habakkuk still asked why:

"Lord, my God, holy and eternal," he cried, "you have chosen the fierce Babylonians to punish us. But you—a holy God who cannot look upon evil—why are you silent when wicked people overcome those who are more righteous?"

Then he went to a high place to be alone, to watch and wait for God's answer to his complaint. It came. The Lord told him to write it down clearly on tablets because, even though fulfillment would seem slow, it would surely come. The answer: "Those who are evil will not survive, but those who are righteous will live because they are faithful to God." (Habakkuk 1:1—2:4, paraphrased)

Then followed a series of woes upon the unrighteous for their wine and wealth, greed, arrogance, violence and idol worship. The plunderers would themselves be plundered.

"You are doomed! . . . The Lord Almighty has done this. But the earth will be as full of the knowledge of the Lord's glory as the seas are full of water" (2:12-14) . . . "What's the use of an idol? . . . It may be covered with silver and gold, but there is no life in it. The Lord is in his holy Temple; let everyone on earth be silent in his presence" (2:18-20).

Habakkuk was awe-struck by the words of the Lord.

Evangelical Visitor

He reflected on the mighty deeds of God in the past as God dealt with his people and the nations. "Now do again in our times the great deeds you used to do," Habakkuk pled. "Be merciful even when you are angry" (3:2).

His heart pounded, his lips quivered with fear, his body went limp and his legs trembled. Somehow, in the process of seeing the workings of God and listening to his voice, Habakkuk's cry of why changed to a cry of trust. "I will quietly wait for the time to come when God will punish those who attack us," he said (3:16).

That was not all. He burst forth with joyful praise, saying that even if the crops fail and sheep and cattle all die, "I will still be joyful and glad because the Lord God is my savior. The Sovereign Lord gives me strength." No wobbly feet beneath him now. He said, "He makes me sure-footed as a deer and keeps me safe on the mountains" (3:19).

Like Habakkuk, we can find help for our complaints and fears:

1. Help comes when the living Lord is real to us and we wait alone, listening quietly for his word to us. We have complained enough. As Job said, "Who can say to him, 'What are you doing?' " (Job 9:12, NIV).

2. In communion with God, we are bruised and blest by his living and active written Word, and by strong impressions on our minds that seem surely to be his voice to us by his Holy Spirit who now dwells with us who believe.

3. In faithful Bible study, prayer, and meditation, we get a view of God in the long sweep of sacred history. We see him as the Lord of history and beyond time. Our hearts "burn within us" as we see in a new way our Savior in whose hands God has placed everything.

4. As we reflect on God's mighty deeds in the past for his people, including us, we plead, "O God, do great deeds again in our time! Exercise your power on behalf of these desperate situations:_____

and _____. Move mightily upon the lives of _____, _____, and our lives too. Show us our tasks in your scheme of things and enable us to do them for your Kingdom's sake and with joy."

5. We learn or relearn that, as in the past, God is working out his purposes in ways not understood at the time. Who could see the purposes of God when awful things were happening to Joseph—sold into slavery by his brothers? Who could see the supreme purpose of God when Christ hung on the cross in seeming defeat?

6. We find that we must leave with God the mystery of suffering—whether God plans it or permits it. We know that God can bring good out of suffering and that he gives sufficient grace for each hardship. We know, too, that we are God's instruments to alleviate the suffering of others.

7. We see that "the wicked will not survive and the righteous will live by their faithfulness." We leave the punishment end of things to God's wisdom and timing—but, oh, that all humanity would find and follow the Savior!

8. We realize that, like the sun clouded over and hidden from our view, the living God of history is functioning in the world and in our lives every moment of every day, whether we perceive it at the time or not.

9. In spite of hard circumstances, we are still joyful and glad because the Lord God is our Savior. "The Sovereign Lord gives me strength" (Hab. 3:18-19). It is real! It is all that matters!

10. In closeness to God, our eyes have been opened. We see God's acts more clearly and have hope for the future. One day the Sovereign Lord will set all things right. "The earth will be as full of the knowledge of the Lord's glory as the seas are full of water" (2:14). "Let everyone on earth be silent in his presence" (2:20). Let my own heart be silent and worshipful before him. Yes, the Lord is still in his holy Temple and he is still in charge of his world and of my life.

Such is the answer of faith and of faithfulness—believing in God and his purposes when the future seems dark.

Personally, I face an uncertain prognosis since surgery for colon cancer in August 1983. So far, the Lord has defied the statistics. I cannot say whether in weakness I may one day cry why. So far, I have not been able to worry and am as busy and happy as ever. As the psalmist said, "My times are in your hands" (Psa. 31:15). I have never known greater peace nor experienced greater joy in the Lord, in the truths of the Scriptures, in the love of the brother/sisterhood, in the work of the Lord, in the hope of the future, and in the reality of Holy Spirit presence—that "deposit guaranteeing what is to come" (2 Cor. 5:5, NIV)! It is God's plan that we serve his good purpose for our brief stay on this earth and, in his time, to move to our permanent home in heaven. Let us not nag God about our health as though we expect to stay here always. He knows what he is doing with our lives. "He will watch over your life" (Psa. 121:7).

Is a child afraid in the dark when her hand is in the hand of her Father?

evangelical VISITOR

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FEATURES

- 2 How can we face the future? Ruth B. Stoltzfus
- 4 Rx for '86—be an encourager Leonard J. Chester
- 6 Evaluations: who needs them? Ralph A. Lebold
- 7 Evaluations: we need them Harvey R. Sider
- 9 Music, Worship, and You Bruce A. Gerlach
- 11 The best show in town? Steven J. Cole
- 13 "People told people"—church planting in Oklahoma City Ira Eyster
- 14 Farmers find hope amid darkness Steve Shenk
- 15 Study Conference on Interpreting the Bible Owen Alderfer
- 16 General Conference Information
- 16 Celebrating a bicentennial with Canadian Mennonites and Brethren in Christ
- 16 CHA Convention set for Columbus, April 22-24
- 17 Alive and well in Cuba Roy V. Sider
- 20 Hearing both sides of the story Daniel Epp-Tiessen
- 23 Models for development:
Tractors or water buffaloes? Daniel Epp-Tiessen

DEPARTMENTS

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 12 Daily Bible Readings | 29 Phoebe's Journal |
| 19 God at work in our world | 29 Pontius' Puddle |
| 24 Church News | 30 Onesimus |
| 26 Stewardship | 31 Editorial: Agenda (or, things I have to do) |
| 28 Messiah College News | 32 The Contemporary Scene |

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Sound "spiritual" enough? Encouraging may not seem as exciting as evangelizing, nor as practical as hospitality. It pales beside the glamour of healing, or of going as a missionary.

Hebrews 3:13 focuses "encouraging" as a daily vitamin to be shared: "But encourage one another daily . . . so that none may be hardened . . ." Hebrews 10:25 has been preached and popularized—but only the first half; note the second—"But let us encourage one another . . ."

In *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow*, (p. 153 ff.), C. Peter Wagner uses the older term "exhortation" to describe one of the grace-gifts from the Holy Spirit. Romans 12:8 (NIV) states that it is a gift of encouraging. Encouraging must be a significant activity of the believers—the New International Version uses the word more than 60 times, and "discourage" nearly 20 times. Let's be more specific.

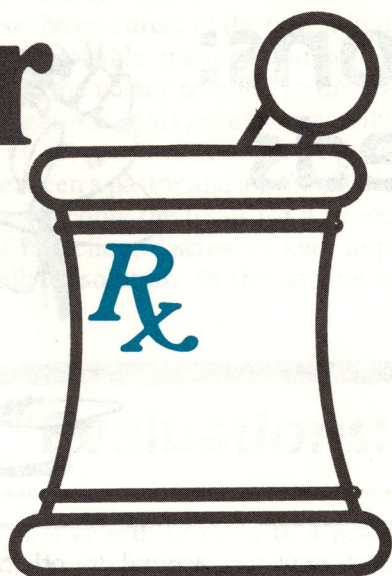
A vital form of encouraging is *to comfort*. Day after day, week after week, month after month, people face losses—death, moving, separation/divorce, accident, unemployment, surgeries, children leaving home. Every loss requires some period of grieving—it may be postponed, but not avoided. You can encourage someone today by comforting him or her.

A friend coping with a loss needs to be listened to—her feelings may be torn to raw shreds. Are you a "safe" person with whom she might deposit this tender cargo? This friend

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Evangelical Visitor

Rx for '86— be an encourager



by Leonard J. Chester

may be confused—many feelings boil inside—anger, guilt, fear, relief, depression. All are predictable and normal—just telling her that will encourage her! She is indeed not going “crazy.”

Be an encourager! Comfort someone. Let him have eye contact with you. Touch and hug him. Don't talk much. Don't tell him to “snap out of it.”

Another way to encourage is to *console*—to assure a church board member that she has value, worth. She has a contribution to make, that life would be different if she weren't here. The apostle Barnabas' name means “son of consolation/encouragement.” He convinced young John Mark of his worth to the cause of Christ even after John Mark had abandoned the prior missionary journey. To console persons is to lessen mental and physical distress.

Everyone faces threatening experiences throughout the life-span which shake our sense of worth. We miss reaching goals we have set—vocation, education, sports, health, service, family, marriage. The married, the single, the children, the adults, the elderly, the youth—no age status is exempt.

Every day in 1986—be an encourager! Lessen someone's burden. Help him to feel valuable—spend some time with him. Send a card or note. Use the telephone. Show her it wouldn't be too much trouble to have her over for a meal. You might even prevent a suicide attempt.

A third form of specific encouragement is to *counsel* people. This means assisting your nephew to discover his own direction—not “telling” him, but helping him to think, to consider options, to talk about possible courses of action. This kind

of ministry is not restricted to those with specialized skills or training—but is open to everyone in the body of Christ.

You can use your experiences in your lifetime to bring insight to your neighbour. Reflect on how your relationship with God and your knowledge of Scripture, hymns and books—all of these life resources have enriched your perspective. Share from these. Using this grace-gift, you may help the person from becoming hardened by sin and turning away from following Christ.

A woman put this ad in the local paper: “Lost fifty pounds! Selling my fat clothes—sizes 18-20.” She was bombarded with phone calls, but nobody wanted to buy the clothes. They all wanted to know how she had lost the fifty pounds.

Be an encourager! Offer your insights to someone today.

To encourage means to help, to cheer, to support, to motivate, to further another's cause. Every day, I pray that God will help me to see the people who need this ministry. Who are they? Let your mind dwell on these words—the uncertain, the lonely, the grieving, the afraid, the insecure, the depressed, the bored, the discouraged.

Want to strengthen your congregation? Lift up a struggling colleague at work? Change the tone of your family life? Help a far-off missionary?

Try one of these: say thanks; offer congratulations; send a gift; write a letter; give a welcome; sit down and listen; play a game; go to the park; remember his or her name; plan a picnic. You can add to this small list.

Prescription for 1986—*be an encourager!*

Evaluations: who needs them?



by Ralph A. Lebold

The words Congregational Pastoral Leadership Evaluation have a nasty connotation for some people. At times, the suggestion of having a leadership review sends a ripple of panic through a congregation. Congregations and individuals may well have memories of reviews filled with painful episodes where harsh statements were made, relationships were strained or broken, or where leaders resigned and even left the pastoral ministry. These things can and do happen. We all have our share of horror stories to tell in which a leadership evaluation went badly. Consequently, many persons in our congregations are ready to abandon leadership evaluations. Some pastoral leaders would rather resign than go through the experience.

But evaluations are a fact of life. We all make an assessment, whether consciously or unconsciously, of our experiences with others. Unless there is an explicit opportunity, we generally do not give feedback to others on how we experience them. However, we often form opinions which

affect how we respond to others. Evaluations can offer a constructive outlet to voice our impressions.

Therefore, it is hardly fair to eliminate formal evaluations—a resource which we have barely begun to understand. Nor should we blindly involve ourselves in a little known process. To help us identify helpful ways for doing leadership reviews, we do have at our disposal literature and experience. This article will focus on some evaluation categories and procedures.

Giving feedback, encouragement, admonition, or guidance to leaders is not new. The Apostle Paul is a good model for us. His pastoral epistles are good illustrations of one form of giving leaders some feedback and guidance.

Our theology solidly teaches us that as Christian disciples we are called to mutual admonition and discipline, to equipping persons for the work of ministry, to mutual burden bearing. Our Christian calling (as the one who is under evaluation) is to grow, to change, to learn, and to strive to become more like Christ. What better way to have this happen than to allow our brothers and sisters to surround us through an evaluation experience?

A major concern of the church, therefore, should be to explore possibilities for developing regular and structured feedback procedures for persons involved in ministry. Let us clarify that the words “evaluation,” and “review” will be used interchangeably in this article. Some people object to the word evaluation because it sounds cold and judgmental. For others, the word review is more acceptable. It can be argued that both words have their strengths and limitations. The important thing to remember is that the process itself has greater importance than the word we use.

Two types of review

How shall we do an evaluation? This is an important question which can only be answered after a primary question is considered—what is the focus or goal for the review? The two major categories of review possibilities are:

A. *The congregational or group evaluation.* The congregation or group can do an evaluation of its goals or its programs. The group can review its group experience-goals and quality of experience, or a committee can review its pattern of functioning. This process does not begin

This article is adapted from research by Ralph A. Lebold, president of Conrad Grebel College. A Meetinghouse article.

with a focus on particular individuals, but rather focuses on goals, programs, and group functions.

B. The personal evaluation. Any person can receive feedback in the midst of service/ministry. This pattern can be used for training apprentices, Sunday school teachers, worship leaders, pastoral visitors, etc. This pattern has two common variations. First, it can be used as an opportunity for peer learning. Each participant takes the opportunity to review an experience of ministry with his or her co-workers. Another variation is to call together a group of people who are asked to provide feedback. This is the most common pattern for pastoral leadership reviews.

The patterns outlined under the category of *personal* can be separated further by identifying two groups of persons who are to be evaluated in the church: the larger group—the volunteers; and the smaller group—the paid persons.

Only a small fraction of our congregations use any of the approaches suggested under the category *congregation or group*. Likewise, very few volunteers have been ready to utilize the opportunities available for personal evaluation. Congregations have assumed, however, that it is their prerogative to ask their paid personnel to undergo an evaluation process. It is my contention that all persons in the church should be utilizing this opportunity, whether at the group or individual level. Perhaps our pastoral leaders could model for the whole church a process which we can all use to learn and grow in the midst of our Christian service.

To be more specific, let us consider the pattern of pastoral leadership reviews. There are at least four reasons why a pastor and a congregation would want to engage in a review process. Pastoral reviews, therefore, subdivide themselves into four different types:

1. Performance evaluations are the most common types of reviews. The goal for this type of evaluation is

to help the pastor to become more effective in his/her ministry.

2. Job description reviews are intended to review the effectiveness of the delivery system as defined by the job description. The concern is to use the resources of the pastor in the best possible manner and also to have the pastor respond to the congregations goals as fully as possible.

3. Unresolved issues or problems between a pastor and a congregation can become the focus for a process of reflection, discussion and, hopefully, resolution. In the narrow use

of the concept, this procedure is not an evaluation. However, it is often one of the strongest motivating factors for congregations wanting to enter into a review process.

4. Continuation or termination of an assignment is another motivating factor for a review. Congregations which operate within specific time periods for a leadership assignment need a procedure by which to make a decision. Ballot voting alone severely limits the gathering of useful feedback. Therefore, attempts have been made to utilize an evalua-

(next page, please)

"Evaluations: we need them"

by Harvey R. Sider

It is helpful to listen to a person whose roots have some things in common with the Brethren in Christ, and yet who speaks from outside concerning a crucial issue in the life of our denomination. I strongly affirm Ralph Lebold's positive approach to evaluation of church leadership. Our methods may be different, but the principles remain the same.

Since we are already doing some of the things suggested in the article but since our evaluation system is indeed different, I welcome this opportunity to respond. Let me begin with a word of history, highlighting the significant change that has occurred in the call and evaluation of pastoral leadership within my own generation.

As late as the 1950's, pastors were normally receiving their call to leadership by an open election in the congregation. For example, in 1952, Cheapside "elected" Ronald Loft-house and myself to serve as assistant pastors to Earl Sider. So, upon a simple "call" by way of a ballot vote, we embarked on a ministry in the congregation that had cradled us.

There was no local church board. And who had ever heard of a "pastoral review" process? Since then, we have been refining our calling and evaluation procedures in an attempt to facilitate both the growth of the pastor and enhance the relationships between pastor and congregation.

Ralph Lebold makes a good point when he speaks to the need for and value of evaluation (reviews). I believe it is beneficial for a pastor to have an *annual* review with his pastoral committee (the bishop with the church board, without the pastor). In the Canadian Conference, pastors are aware that my services are available for this. However, it has not been easy to move from the system of a few years ago where the review was generally conducted just prior to the "pastoral vote" as the pastor was coming to the conclusion of his term of employment. Since the idea of an annual review is relatively new, I have been strongly encouraging a biennial review, as well as that which occurs prior to the pastoral expression. The ideal toward which we need to move is an annual occasion where the pastoral committee can meet to evaluate strengths and discuss areas for pastoral growth.

The review always involves the

(next page, please)

Harvey Sider is bishop of the Canadian Conference of the Brethren in Christ Church.

Evaluations: who needs them . . .

tion process in order to gather data to make a decision.

How to proceed

Having decided on a type of pastoral review, how shall we proceed? Each type of evaluation identified above will require a different methodology. For an illustration, the following is suggested for a performance review.

The pastoral leader and the responsible congregational leadership group (for example, the church board) should carefully select six to eight persons who will serve as the evaluation committee. In addition, an outside resource person is selected to give guidance in designing an evaluation procedure and to assist the group throughout its task. This

group, including the person being evaluated, will oversee the entire process.

The committee should take the following steps:

Identify the specific areas to be covered in the performance review (for example: preaching and visitation)

Gather information

- Identify what questions you want answered.
- Find out who has the information.
- Decide how the information will be gathered.
- Proceed to gather the information.

Evaluate

- Bring together all the information.

- List affirmations in the ministry areas being reviewed.
- List items or concerns needing attention.

Plan for Change

- Decide what change is needed.
- Make suggestions for bringing about changes.

Prepare a summary report to the mandating board or congregation. Include a description of the process, summary of key issues (affirmations and concerns), and proposed changes (for reporting and/or congregational decision making.)

Evaluation can be a good learning experience and be growth producing. The challenge for the church is to put forth its best effort to carry out this important task. ■

Evaluations: we need them . . .

bishop of the regional conference. This has significant advantages. The bishop is a constant who brings the same basic understandings to each situation. He serves as an "outside" or neutral facilitator for all the discussions. Since he is the primary link in the calling of a pastor to a local church, he also assumes pastoral care of that individual. He normally conducts the congregational pastoral expression (what used to be called the "pastoral vote"). Since this is always open to interpretation, his presence at the pastoral committee is imperative.

The Board of Bishops has developed tools for the evaluation of both pastor and church board. Normally, I send these to the individual board members several weeks in advance of the review. They are returned to me individually to maintain confidentiality. Out of the evaluation, a profile emerges. It is possible this way to maintain confidences and yet share the composite picture with the pastor, the pastoral committee, and then together in a joint session. This process provides opportunity for candidness, confidentiality, and caring confrontation.

Did you note the reference to eval-

uating the church board in the previous paragraph? All God's people are called to be "ministers." And those who exercise leadership roles (for example, church board members) are equally subject to evaluation, along with pastoral leadership. Since ministry belongs as much to that level as to the pastor, I consider that part of the evaluation process extremely crucial. In reading such returns, I discover that there frequently is a direct correlation between the excellence of the board and the pastor. Self-evaluation of the board must be taken as seriously as the annual pastoral review.

It needs to be understood that the congregational evaluation which occurs prior to the conclusion of a term is a review of ministry and not a "vote." The tool that is used is designed to assist the congregation in reflecting on the ministry of the pastor. However, the final interpretation of the review is the responsibility of the bishop, the pastor, and the pastoral committee. This provides more flexibility in analyzing the results of the review and making an appropriate statement to the congregation. It provides a positive way of building up the pastor.

The evaluation tools are an attempt (1) to be more objective than simply responding to a subjective statement like, "How do you feel about your pastor's ministry?" and (2) to apply the same criteria to all pastors. These tools are constantly under review. Revisions occur frequently in order to improve the quality of the review instrument.

While periodic evaluations are imperative, it is equally important that continuous, constructive evaluation occurs. The primary tool is always at hand—open communication. Church leaders must assist in the building up of each other. This means that we must develop the ability to keep channels of communication open throughout the year and not wait until the annual review to deal with something that could have been changed six months ago. Sometimes an inner circle such as the deacons can help to facilitate this.

Evaluations? Decidedly! They are a positive facilitator to growth. We need both those evaluations which are of a continuous, informal nature as well as the annual review. Accountability and personal growth are conducive to an effective ministry. ■

Music, Worship, and You

The article below is intended for the non-musician as well as the musician. It is intended to help all of us worship God better.

by **Bruce A. Gerlach**

All of us have at least a vague idea of what worship is, its elements, and directives. And we all have at least a tiny bit of knowledge concerning music, you know . . . Bach, . . . Beethoven, and . . . B . . . B . . ., whoever? But many of us have yet to consider how the two work together and how they build on one another.

First, let's consider worship. Worshiping God is not something that

automatically happens on Sunday mornings between 10:00 and 11:00 a.m. It is not the worship service that is worship. And it does not have to take place in church with lots of worshipers around. Worship is, most of all, a vertical encounter with almighty God, when a believer communes and fellowships with him.

The worshiper praises God, talks with him, and listens to him speak. This can and should be experienced at home, alone, with the family, and finally with the larger body, the church. The worship experience on a Sunday morning is only a rehearsal of what should have been happening in the home all week long. Is your personal fellowship with God one that includes praising him, talking to him and letting him speak to you? If it is, then you understand what it means to walk with him, and to love him. If not, you are missing the greatest relationship ever conceived. God

desires our fellowship with him. He made us for that purpose. A good example of a dynamic personal worship experience is found in Isaiah 6. Isaiah the prophet had an incredible vision of God on his throne. He was struck with a sense of his own sin and unworthiness. God knew his heart and forgave him. The net result of this experience was that Isaiah felt compelled to go tell all the people about this God who was so unbelievably awesome and yet forgave him of his sin.

Do you see the parallel between this passage and our worship services? Isaiah's eyes were opened to see God, at least in a vision. All of the heavenly beings were praising God saying "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord Almighty. The whole earth [universe] is full of his glory" (v. 3). Isaiah immediately realized his sin. By the way, Isaiah was not what you would call a desperate sinner. Any of our churches would have been glad to have him as a deacon or on the church board, even before this encounter with God. But Isaiah experienced what happens when people get a glimpse of who God really is. They realize that their own righteousness is as filthy rags before the holy God (Isa. 64:6).

So you see, our individual and corporate worship ought to be filled with these kinds of elements: a sense of who God is, a heart full of praise, an attitude of repentance, and a willingness to go and tell.

Now where does music come in? I am convinced that God loves music. Why else would he talk about it in his book as much as he does? Now I wouldn't be so bold as to suggest that liking music is a prerequisite for true spirituality, but . . . on the other hand . . . well that's beside the point. The real issue is that God originated the use of music in worshiping him. In our study of Old Testament worship we find many, many examples of singing, dancing, and loud instrumental music being used in the worship of God (Exodus 15:1-21; II Chronicles 23:13).

As a result, God's people have been using music to praise and worship him ever since. That is over

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4000 years of music and worship. What a long tradition! All of us should understand an important truth at this point. God is not really interested in the style of music played or sung. Music from 4000 years ago would sound very strange to our ears, and of course, our best hymns would probably be meaningless noise to the ancient Hebrews. I am sure that God equally enjoys both ancient Hebrew music and modern hymns. He accepts the praise and even revels in it when it is offered with a humble heart full of devotion to him, no matter what it may sound like to our sometimes prejudiced ears. Now isn't that good news?!

The scriptural foundations for music and worship have now been laid. But what about you? If you are like the average Sunday-go-to-meet-in' person, then you probably feel a little overwhelmed. But take heart. Good things take time and practice. And believe me, this kind of music and worship is a good thing.

Now let's talk about the two types of music found in most worship services. The first is the instrumental music, which most often comes from an organ, or organ and piano combination. Perhaps this type of music sounds like background mush to you, unobtrusive and certainly not to be regarded as part of worship! Wrong! The organist should be choosing music which is designed to call the attention of the worshiper to God and to lead in praise and adoration of him. The music is chosen and prepared for the purpose of setting moods and balancing styles. Organists would do well to learn to play a huge variety of music types and styles and then use them all interchangeably. Good communicators change their content and style and one is never sure of what is coming next. Good organists do the same. Remember that in each worship service the organ music is not background mush for filling dead space, but is a carefully chosen offering to God designed to lead the worshipers to him.

What about the organist? What about your organist? Do you thank God for him or her? Do you realize

the amount of devotion this person has to God, and to worshipping him with music? Think of a time before the advent of radio, TV, records, and tapes, when the only music *ever* heard was done by a "live" performer. That must have been great. There was no such thing as background mush music. Sixty-piece orchestras did not sit in the corner of F. W. Woolworths in 1895 and play waltz music unless it was a *special* occasion. All music at that time was "special." But in this day of recorded music in the shopping mall, or on the telephone, in the office and milking parlor, the organist in church has been taken for granted. If the music played during the prelude, offertory, and postlude were recorded digitally at some great cathedral by a master performer and played through a sound system, it would make little difference to many, I fear. How then do we combat this attitude.

First I would suggest that each one of us put ourselves in the organist's shoes. Try to imagine yourself practicing hours for hymns and special numbers, only to be thought of as little more than a \$1.98 recording. Second, actively listen to as much of the service music as possible and appreciate it for what it is. Finally, you may want to thank the musicians for their part in making your services the meaningful worship experiences that they are.

The other type of music used in worship services is the vocal music, praising God by singing. There is no other, more personal expression of praise than singing. When we sing we need to lose all of our personal inhibitions and focus on God. Some of us are not good singers. I am glad that God listens to the heart of praise rather than judges us by the beauty of our voice.

The most important music in the worship service is the congregational singing, for at least two reasons. First of all, it is an expression of corporate worship. We all join together to affirm the truth of a particular song. Secondly, it forces us to participate actively. How often do we just sit back and watch the "show" and judge its effectiveness on

how it made us feel regardless of whether we took any active part in it or not? Brothers and sisters, we must put this attitude to death! Worship must be active involvement from everyone, or by definition it is not worship.

Having a choir sing an anthem is another means of vocal musical worship. Trained choirs were a part of worship since the days of the Exodus. In any group of believers God has given the talent of singing skillfully to some. When men and women get a vision for a dynamic music and worship experience, one of the results forthcoming will be an organized choir, or two, or three. . . . These specially skilled people are called by God to serve him and his church in a special way, that is, by training to sing skillfully to the Lord. An unusual bond of fellowship exists among those who serve in this way.

Many smaller Brethren in Christ churches don't have a choir yet. In all those situations, I would challenge the church leaders to enlarge your vision for the kind of ministry a choir would have in your worship services. Then use that vision to pray fervently for God to provide the leadership and personnel you need. He promises to provide our needs. A choir will provide a dynamic worship experience and multiply the spiritual ministry to all the choir members.

In conclusion, all of us need to ask ourselves the following questions. How do I worship God? Do I follow the biblical examples? Am I challenged to serve because of my encounter with God? And finally, what role does music play in my understanding of worship? Will I go on to use music to more effectively communicate my love and devotion to God? Will I let music be a better communicator of God's word to me? As we grow in these areas, let us renew our resolve to understand God more fully by worshipping him with a song.

"Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly . . . as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your heart to God" (Colossians 3:16).

The best show in town?

by Steven J. Cole

"Say, Mary, how about if we go over to First Church this Sunday morning? I see in the paper that they're having that famous Christian speak."

"Well, honey, I don't know. I noticed that Second Church is having that recently converted rock star, and I think the kids would enjoy that. And we can catch the sacred concert and prophecy film over at Third Church in the evening."

Let's face it: we live in a spectator society. From football to the movie theater to the ubiquitous American altar known as television, we are programmed to sit passively while the performer croons, "Let me entertain you."

Quite often the church unwittingly caters to this mentality. We assume that we are called to compete for spectators. So we attempt to put on a better show. We advertise in the papers, we put our current attraction on our marquees, and pray for a packed house.

After all, if our goal is to cram as many people into the building as possible, then we had better have the most entertaining show in town. (God help us on Super Bowl Sunday!) The church with the most people wins.

To plan, staff, and implement such successful programs requires a team of ingenious leaders. We rack our brains and comb through minis-

try magazines to garner the latest ideas. If we want to succeed (which, being translated, means have a large audience) we know we've got to keep those hits a comin'! The bottom line is growth. The staff had better perform. Annual reports are just around the corner!

I'd like to suggest a radical alternative to the approach which views the church as an entertaining program: The church is the household of God (1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Peter 4:17). We are God's family.

Everybody knows that. But I've been to enough churches and talked to enough of my pastor colleagues to know that very few churches operate primarily on that premise. But make no mistake about it: the two approaches have very different implications for church leaders.

Families gather for fundamentally different reasons than audiences do. Families don't come together primarily to be entertained. They like (or *should* like) being with one another. They enjoy sharing life in an atmosphere where every person— young or old, successful or not-so-successful—belongs by virtue of birth or adoption or marriage into the family.

Family leaders don't feel pressured by family members to come up with creative programs for every gathering. The members don't threaten to join another family if the entertainment doesn't meet their expectations. Indeed, the only expectation for families is to be together, to share life

openly, and to love and be loved.

To be sure, family gatherings require some organization and leadership. Someone has to plan the menu, buy the food, prepare it, and clean up after the meal. But that is a far cry from producing a program. If all the members do their part, the planning and work can serve to deepen relationships in the context of life.

The main attraction

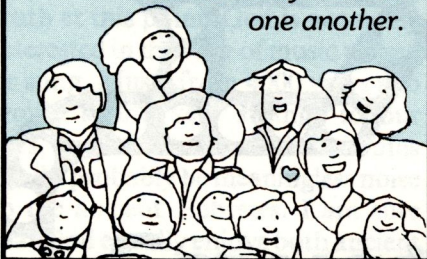
As the family of God, the church should gather primarily unto a *Person*, not a program. *Christ* is our main attraction. He has promised us his presence as we gather in his name. And we gather with *persons*, the other members of the family, to enjoy and edify one another.

Many Christians today assume that by attending the program at a local church they have fulfilled the command not to forsake assembling together (Heb. 10:25). But in the context, that command entails stimulating one another to love and good deeds and encouraging one another. An audience doesn't have much chance of obeying that command; a family does.

So how, as pastoral leaders, do we turn the corner? First, the change must start with leadership. If we encourage the entertainment approach to ministry, our people will fall in step. It's the cultural mentality. So we must consciously reject the let-me-entertain-you philosophy and teach people that the church is primarily family, not attendance at a

Steven J. Cole is pastor of Cedarpoint Community Church in Crestline, California.

Daily readings that
illustrate ways to love
one another.



"Love One Another"

JANUARY

Day Book & Chapter

I. Forgiving	
A. God's Forgiveness	
	1. Understanding forgiveness
W	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Romans 3:21-26
T	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Romans 4:5-8
F	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 1 John 1:5-10
	2. Extent of forgiveness
S	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Psalm 103:1-12
S	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 Isaiah 38:10-17
M	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 Micah 7:14-19
T	<input type="checkbox"/> 7 Hebrews 10:11-18
	3. Cost of forgiveness
W	<input type="checkbox"/> 8 Hebrews 9:22-28
T	<input type="checkbox"/> 9 Matthew 26:17-28
	4. Conditions for forgiveness
F	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 Acts 26:12-20
S	<input type="checkbox"/> 11 Isaiah 55:1-7
S	<input type="checkbox"/> 12 Psalm 32:1-7
B. Forgiving Others	
	1. Reasons to forgive
M	<input type="checkbox"/> 13 Colossians 3:1-13
T	<input type="checkbox"/> 14 Galatians 5:16-25
W	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 Matthew 18:21-35
	2. Results of forgiving
T	<input type="checkbox"/> 16 Romans 12:14-21
F	<input type="checkbox"/> 17 Psalm 18:16-25
S	<input type="checkbox"/> 18 Matthew 5:1-12
	3. Forgiving by a church
S	<input type="checkbox"/> 19 1 Corinthians 5:1-8
M	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 2 Corinthians 2:1-8
C. Suffering Injustices	
	1. God's control
T	<input type="checkbox"/> 21 Job 1:7-22
W	<input type="checkbox"/> 22 Isaiah 46:1-11
T	<input type="checkbox"/> 23 Lamentations 3:25-37
F	<input type="checkbox"/> 24 1 Thessalonians 5:12-18
S	<input type="checkbox"/> 25 Romans 8:18-30
	2. Your reaction
S	<input type="checkbox"/> 26 1 Peter 2:13-25
M	<input type="checkbox"/> 27 James 1:2-8
T	<input type="checkbox"/> 28 1 Corinthians 6:1-8
W	<input type="checkbox"/> 29 1 Peter 3:13-18
D. Results of an unforgiving spirit	
	1. Bitterness
T	<input type="checkbox"/> 30 Ephesians 4:25-32
F	<input type="checkbox"/> 31 Romans 3:9-18

FEBRUARY

Day Book & Chapter

S	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Hebrews 12:12-15
	2. Anger
S	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Proverbs 14:29; 16:32; 19:11; 22:24,25; 25:28
M	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Ecclesiastes 7:5-9
T	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 James 1:12-20
	3. Clamor
W	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 Acts 22:22-25
T	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 John 19:15,16
F	<input type="checkbox"/> 7 Proverbs 21:19
	4. Slander
S	<input type="checkbox"/> 8 Proverbs 26:18-28

This informative outline on interpersonal relationships and all Scripture references are taken from the Love One Another Bible study; ©Churches Alive, 1978, used by permission.

If you find these readings helpful, we recommend the seven-book study series, suited for individual and/or group study. For a free brochure, contact: Churches Alive International, Box 3800, San Bernardino, CA 92413

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
EVANGELICALS**
P.O. BOX 28, WHEATON, ILLINOIS 60159

We must consciously reject the let-me-entertain-you philosophy and teach people that church is primarily family, not attendance at a program.

program. Since we're talking about swimming against the cultural stream, it will be a constant struggle to re-educate.

As pastoral leaders we must provide structures where family-type gatherings of God's people can occur. If our only official church gatherings consist of auditoriums filled with passive spectators watching the performers on stage, our talk about the church family will fall on deaf ears. We need gatherings small enough for people to act like family. We need meetings structured for every-member-ministry and open sharing (as in 1 Cor. 14:26). How else can we stimulate and encourage one another?

Could we have lost something the early church enjoyed by our insistence that if we don't gather at the church building, it isn't officially "church"? The early church saw itself as God's family, and they met primarily in homes. Most families do.

Gathering in homes isn't binding on us today. But if the church is primarily family, not program, then it may be of more than antiquarian interest that the early church did gather in homes.

In our church we provide such an opportunity on Sunday evenings. We have divided up the congrega-

tion into somewhat geographic groupings. We gather in homes to meet with the Lord and one another. There is freedom for singing, encouragement or exhortation from the scriptures, the sharing of personal experiences and concerns, and prayer. We climax the time around the Lord's Table, followed by light refreshments.

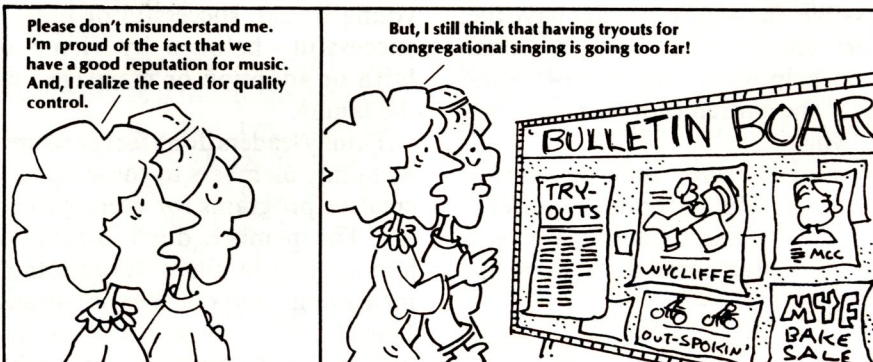
Of course, not everyone will like meeting in homes. Many enjoy the comfortable anonymity and escape from the responsibility afforded by attending the program in the auditorium. It can be threatening to open your life to other believers. It demands a lot of commitment to take the priesthood of believers seriously and make a personal contribution to a meeting. It's much more fun to be entertained.

But we've never been commanded to put on the best show in town. We're called "shepherds," not "program directors." We've never been told by God that success is a full auditorium.

Our task is to shepherd God's flock, giving oversight to his household, the church. We must lead God's people to experience the church primarily as family, gathered unto the living Christ. So what's playing at your church this week? ■

Sisters and Brothers

Joel Kauffmann



"People told people"—church planting in Oklahoma City

by Ira Eyster

In the late 1980, my wife Ernestine and I were asked by Warren Hoffman, pastor of the newly planted Oklahoma City Brethren in Christ Church, to be the church treasurers. Living some 35 miles from the projected site of the Oklahoma City church and being significantly involved in a church of another denomination at the time, we were reluctant to make this commitment. After due consideration we consented to the pastor's request. Little did we know of the apprehensions—sometimes fears—or the ultimate joy and satisfaction that would come from that decision.

Our prior experience having been in established churches, my wife and I did not know the questions surrounding a church planting—much less the answers! We were fortunate. God was at work and, best of all, had supplied an outstanding pastoral team in Warren and Connie Hoffman. They could sing, Warren could preach, and they both had—and have—a superabundance of faith and enthusiasm. But they, like us, had no previous experience in starting a church.

Unanswered questions can become apprehensions and apprehensions frequently become fears. How do we meet the budget? Where shall we meet? How do we overcome the Brethren in Christ identity problem? Where are the helpers? Where should we focus our efforts? What should be our priorities? How do we get people to attend?

Fortunately, because none of us

really knew the answers to these perplexing questions, we became joint participants in seeking workable solutions. We met, we prayed, and we upheld each other. We were fortified in those early phases of the work by other persons who formerly had been associated with the Brethren in Christ and by the unflagging optimism and faith of our pastor and his wife.

We went to work. We knocked on doors, made phone calls to newcomers in the area, conducted home Bible studies, solicited assistance from all available sources, heard (and made) prayer requests, held informal gatherings, made the church at large aware of our presence and our needs, and made many personal visitations.

Then, new and exciting things began to happen! Our plans, our prayers, and our efforts came to fruition by way of new faces, new personalities. We were indeed beginning to minister to the lives of the people of Oklahoma City.

The simplest way to explain how it happened is that "people told people." Those who knew of families who were planning to move to Oklahoma City and also knew our pastor or of the new Brethren in Christ Church encouraged their friends to look us up. Several families who have become outstanding assets to the church came in this way.

On our very first "knocking on doors" experience, we met a mother who was housesitting for her absent son and daughter-in-law. When the young family returned home, she told them that we had been there, which in turn opened the way for a subsequent visit. Today, this couple beautifully know the Lord and are actively involved in the leadership

and teaching ministries of our local church.

Our pastor and his wife made several visits to an unchurched family in their neighborhood. It appeared that their visits were in vain. Later, some recently converted friends of theirs moved to Oklahoma City and inquired of the residents about where they could find a church. They were referred to Warren who had been visiting them. As a result, the new family became active members of our church. The circle became complete when the original unchurched family came to know the Lord as a result of the influence and testimony of their newly-arrived friends.

And so the drama of "people telling people" continues to add to our excitement of serving the Lord, and to the glory of God as others tell friends and neighbors.

This has been an exciting venture and one in which we are happy to have shared. During this journey, our faith has constantly been challenged. It was weak when the pastor suggested this new church give 23 percent of its offerings to the Cooperative Ministries of the church at large. How could we ask this of people who hardly knew the Brethren in Christ? Our limited faith was strengthened when the church accepted the challenge, for God had indeed blessed them with generous hearts. They not only gave 23 percent to Cooperative Ministries, but met the local budget needs, and at this writing have contributed \$50,000 toward a building fund.

We can only say, "Thank you, Warren, for inviting us to participate in this journey." Our reward has been the glowing testimonies of those whose lives have been touched by this ministry.

Ira Eyster is vice-chairman of the Board for Media Ministries as well as serving the denomination as Executive Director of Planned Giving. He and his wife Ernestine live in Norman, Okla.

Farmers find hope amid darkness

Second Faith and Farming Conference

by Steve Shenk

Nearly 140 farmers found hope amid the darkness of the current agricultural crisis during the second Faith and Farming Conference, Dec. 4-6, at Laurelville (Pa.) Mennonite Church Center. They came from throughout North America and represented a variety of denominations.

Tears mixed with laughter as the farmers shared stories of pain and hardship and enjoyed good fun and fellowship. Several of the participants have already lost their farms or are currently going through bankruptcy proceedings.

Last year's conference, with a slightly larger attendance, raised awareness in the church about the plight of the farmers and launched a variety of efforts to help meet their needs.

This year's event was more reflective, with the farmers helping each other see that they can learn from their hardships and that good things can come out of bad times.

They even talked about the need for some farmers to change vocations, even while promoting farming as a "way of life" and even a "right."

"Yes, there is life after farming," said Nancy Kinsinger Halder of Parnell, Iowa. She and her husband recently lost their farm and are looking for other work.

While acknowledging the pain of her family's experience, Halder said it was not as emotionally trying for them as for others because they are still relatively young and got into farming after pursuing other careers. Halders have also been open about their troubles with their congrega-



Members of the Laurelville Continuing Committee report on their work since the first Faith and Farming Conference a year ago. Left to right are Mark Epp of Henderson, Nebr.; Wilmer Heisey of Akron, Pa.; Bob Yoder of Eureka, Ill.; and Don Gingerich of Parnell, Iowa.

tion and have received much help and support from the members.

Halder said it helps, too, to get involved in helping other struggling farmers. She and her husband currently operate Mennonite Central Committee's Farm Crisis Hotline out of their home.

In a well-received address on "Hope and Vision," Iowa farm leaders Don and Karen Gingerich called on participants to "re-invent agriculture" by using creative new ways to earn a living on the farm. Farmers will need to learn to be *less* independent and less self-reliant, they said. "We must support each other as never before," added Karen. "Let us be light in the world of agriculture."

Warmth and humor pervaded the conference, and the tone was set by Bible study leader James Myer and main speaker Conrad Wetzel. Myer is a Lititz, Pa., pastor and currently moderator of the Church of the Brethren. Wetzel is a trained psychologist and leader of Plow Creek Fellowship—a rural Mennonite community near Tiskilwa, Ill.

Stress in the farm family and in the farming business was the topic of

two addresses by Wetzel. The other topic of the conference, presented by a five-member panel, was "The Christian Farmer and Government." In addition, John Rudy of Mennonite Foundation gave a presentation on bankruptcy.

In a report by the nine-member Laurelville Continuing Committee appointed during last year's conference, chairman Wilmer Heisey said "a tremendous amount of volunteerism and a whole range of gifts and ministries have been unleashed" in the Mennonite farm community during the last year.

Some of the outgrowths of last year's conference, the committee said, were the Farm Crisis Hotline, support groups in numerous farm communities, an MCC-appointed Farm Issues Task Force, a farm newsletter, and the inter-Mennonite Agriculture Day at the Ames '85 convention of the Mennonite Church.

The farmer-dominated Continuing Committee, several of whose members are also part of the MCC task force, also noted that the General Assembly delegates at Ames '85 called on three inter-Mennonite

Photos by Steve Shenk



Nancy Kinsinger Halder tells participants at Faith and Farming II about her family's experience of losing their farm to creditors recently in Iowa. She and her husband currently operate the MCC Farm Crisis Hotline and out of their home.

organizations—MCC, Mennonite Mutual Aid, and Mennonite Economic Development Associates—to work vigorously together on farm concerns. The MCC task force has proposed that one way to do that would be to have the three agencies employ a full-time resource person to travel throughout North America to help Mennonite farmers with concerns like vocational changes.

As the conference closed, Joanne Hershey of Kinzers, Pa., made an eloquent plea for more attention to the needs of farm families, and especially farm women. "We women are hurting in a way that no one quite realizes," she said. "People tend to blame the farm family for getting themselves into financial trouble instead of offering encouragement."

Jay Garber, an ex-farmer and Lancaster Conference leader who served as co-moderator of the conference, noted how Job in the Old Testament complained about the long-winded speeches and advice of his so-called friends. Job, a troubled farmer himself, lashed out at his "miserable comforters" and said what he needed most was encouragement.

—Steve Shenk for Meetinghouse

Study Conference on Interpreting the Bible

by Owen Alderfer

As Brethren in Christ we have had study conferences on a number of topics such as sanctification, Christian experience, and Christian marriage. For Christians, underlying all such studies is the fundamental question of how we interpret the Bible. Does the Old Testament bear equal weight with the New? Do some portions take precedence over others? Are there any principles that need to be applied in the formulation of life-forming, mind-directing doctrines?

Such questions are particularly significant for Brethren in Christ as we reassess the doctrinal section of our *Manual of Doctrine and Government* over the next several years. Clearly, we have made some shifts in our practices as a denomination over the last 35 years; are the changes justifiable on the grounds of sound biblical interpretation? Or have we simply "backed into" the shape of popular Christianity—or the world-mold?

These are the kinds of questions Brethren in Christ will be dealing with as they come together at McMaster University, immediately prior to General Conference, in a conference on biblical interpretation. The study conference begins at 1:30 p.m. on July 3 and ends at 8:00 p.m. on July 4. The conference is under the auspices of the Board for Ministry and Doctrine in cooperation with the Board of Bishops and other denominational agencies. Guest resource for the occasion is Dr. Clark Pinnock, noted evangelical theologian and professor at McMaster University. Brethren in Christ study leaders and respondents include Martin Schrag, Luke Keefer, Jr., Lawrence Yoder, and Owen Alderfer. The colloquy will generally follow a study format with input and response leading toward group sessions in which effort will be made to apply principles of interpretation.

Participants in the conference will include members of the sponsoring board, the Board for Ministry and Doctrine, the Board of Bishops, all members of the Manual Revision Committee, representatives from all the general church agencies and the regional conferences, and a number of persons at large. Beyond these attendants, the conference is open to any who wish to come on an observer status. This means attending at one's own expense and paying a five dollar registration fee, either with one's registration for General Conference, or to the Board for Ministry and Doctrine at least one month in advance of the study conference. Interested persons throughout the church are invited to come and share on that basis. Registration materials will be provided through the office of the General Conference Director.

The Study Conference on interpreting the Bible is made possible through Cooperative Ministries. Such a study is timely and relevant for Brethren in Christ as we seek to continue to be all that God wants us to be.

For further information, contact Morris Sider at Messiah College, Grantham, Pa 17027.

Owen Alderfer is bishop of the Central Conference of the Brethren in Christ Church.

General Conference Information

This issue of the *Evangelical Visitor* includes the special General Conference insert. Please read it carefully if you plan to attend General Conference, and kindly fill in the registration forms by their indicated deadlines.

Your pastor and Bishop either have, or soon will have, extra copies of the insert. You can also feel free to make photo copies to take care of your needs. A separate registration form is needed for each man, woman, and child attending Conference.

The first business session of the 1986 General Conference, convening at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, will be on Saturday, July 5, at 1:00 p.m. Registration at Conference will be on Friday evening, July 4, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m., and on Saturday, July 5, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. The final business session is *scheduled* to conclude at noon on Thursday, July 10, 1986. If needed, there will be a Thursday afternoon session.

Pre-Conference Meeting: The Board for Ministry and Doctrine is sponsoring a "Study Conference on Interpreting the Bible" on Thursday and Friday before General Conference. You are welcome to attend as an observer. Be sure to read the article in this issue of the *Evangelical Visitor* for details before registering for General Conference.

Special 200th Anniversary Celebration on Sunday morning of General

Conference. Plans are being made to provide transportation to Kitchener for everyone who wishes to attend. No service is planned at McMaster. Be sure to read the announcement in this issue for details before registering for General Conference.

Ample lodging and good meals are available on campus. The facilities are excellent.

The Convention Director will again be assigning space for exhibits. Please make your request in terms of 8-foot modules. To cover rental costs, kindly include a check for \$10 for each 8-foot table needed. A limited number of tables will be near electrical outlets. If you need an outlet, be sure to include that information with your request and check (made out to General Conference).

Boards, committees, and agencies may submit requests to the Convention Director for meeting rooms to be used before and during the Conference. These reservations can be made either before or during the Conference. Give date and time, and how many will be in the group. The Private Dining Room, seating 400, can be booked for mealtimes.

From now through June, each issue of the *Evangelical Visitor* will have General Conference Information. You will find it helpful to keep these issues at hand.

For more information, contact Paul

Hostetler, Convention Director, Grantham, PA 17027. Phone: (Office) 717-697-2634, (Home) 717-766-2621. If no one answers at the home number, you can leave a recorded message.

CHA Convention set for Columbus, April 22-24

The Christian Holiness Association will host its 118th annual national convention at the Sheraton Columbus Plaza, Columbus, Ohio, April 22-24, 1986.

In commenting on the convention, CHA executive director Darius Salter notes,

"The greatest need in our world is a personal and corporate revival of God's holiness. People are searching for authenticity and authority, and the righteousness of God is the key to both. The reality of meaningful existence is centered in the revelation of the purity of Christ. Christ's purity needs to invade the home, the office, the school, and the government. Information processing, mass communication, high speed technology, and rampant consumerism, have often obscured the crucial values which are foundational to individual integrity and self-worth. It is the conviction of the Christian Holiness Association that a concern for holiness needs to be at the heart of 21st Century processes. Thus, the theme, 'Holiness: An Expanding Influence.' The program will be geared to enable the holiness pastor and layperson in ministering to an increasingly complex world."

Featured speakers for the gathering will include Dr. Paul Tanner, Executive secretary of the Executive Council, The Church of God, Anderson, Indiana; Dr. Timothy L. Smith, church historian; Dr. Leo M. Thornton, former Oregon State Senator and president of Western Evangelical Seminary; Mr. Russell Bredholt, president of Atlantic Communications, Inc.; Dr. Thomas H. Hermiz, president of World Gospel Mission; and Dr. John Oswalt, president of Asbury College.

For more information and registration brochure, contact the C.H.A. Central Office, P.O. Box 68289, Portland, Oregon 97267, Phone (503) 654-6707; or Rev. Doug Carter, Circleville Bible College, P.O. Box 458, Circleville, Ohio 43113, Phone (614) 474-8896.

Celebrating a bicentennial with Canadian Mennonites and Brethren in Christ

Sunday morning, July 6, conference members and visitors are encouraged to drive to Kitchener (45 minutes from McMaster University) to participate in a service of celebration with various Mennonite groups and the Canadian Conference of the Brethren in Christ Church.

Two hundred years ago, the first Mennonites to settle in Ontario crossed the Niagara River, not far from the site of Niagara Christian College. Two years later, River Brethren families Sider and Winger entered Ontario to become the founders of the Canadian Conference of the Brethren in Christ Church.

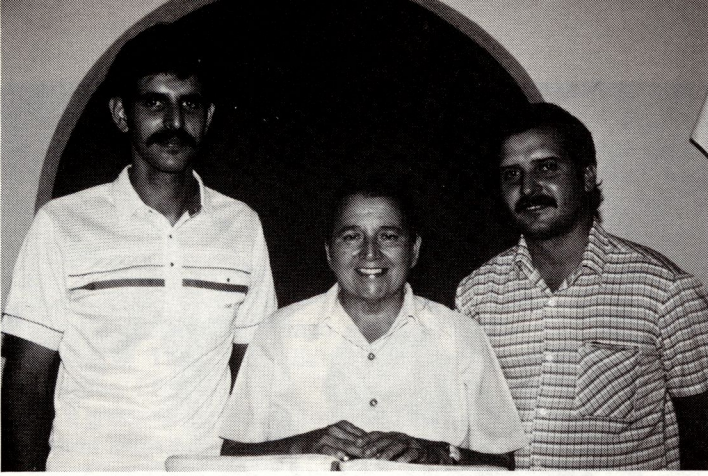
Between July 1-7, a number of significant events will take place: the unveiling of a memorial on July 1 at the First Mennonite Church, Vineland; a musical

on July 5 in Kitchener's "Centre in the Square" concert hall; and all day Sunday services in the 10,000 seat Kitchener Memorial Auditorium (July 6). On Sunday morning, Ross Nigh, longtime Brethren in Christ pastor, will chair the worship service and Ronald J. Sider will bring the message. This service is designed to provide both worship and celebration with significant reflection on our roots.

Transportation will be provided at nominal cost from General Conference at McMaster University to Kitchener for the Sunday morning service, which will conclude in time for the noon meal to be served at McMaster. No service is being planned for Sunday morning on General Conference grounds.

Alive and well in Cuba

by Roy V. Sider



With Juana Garcia (center), pastor at Quatro Caminos, are Jose Rodriguez (left), assistant pastor at Quatro Caminos, and Moises Hernandez (right), pastor of the newly-registered Nazareno congregation nearby.

The Cuban Consulate in Toronto phoned Brethren in Christ Missions in Stevensville. The Consulate announced a telex received from Havana, instructing them to issue visas to Roy and Dorothy Sider. The subsequent question was clearly stated, "Do the visas permit the Siders to stay in the Brethren in Christ pastor's home and minister in the church?" The response rang with equal clarity, "These are special visas: the Siders may go anywhere and speak with anyone in Cuba." What a surprise—visas without asking!

The Air Canada flight landed on schedule at Varadero. Passport clearance was routine. A negative response to the customs officer's question, "Do you have any fruit?" elicited a wave of the hand to proceed and we were in Cuba as official representatives of the Brethren in Christ Church of North America! Cuba was full of surprises!

The Church

The young Brethren in Christ Church in Cuatro Caminos was born just before the revolution in 1958. Two years later the missionaries returned to the United States. After 15 years of silence, the church in North America learned that the church in Cuba had survived. Those were difficult years. The membership dipped to four persons, but Juana Garcia did not give up! Now there are 35 members ranging across the age brackets with significant groups of youth and young parents.

Brief unofficial visits from North

America rebuilt relationships. The ministry of Enrique Palacios proved to be a spiritual impetus to new life and growth. Pablo, his wife Elena, and their children Willie, JoVanie, and baby Joshua are typical of the new converts. Pablo was a Sunday school boy when the Wolgemuths were in Cuba in the '50's. He was converted about two and a half years ago during Enrique Palacios' visits. Now they are active members of the church. Maria is a vivacious song-leader. Willie sat beside me during the song service one evening and was totally perplexed at my inability to understand his Spanish!

Formerly Juana was the only pastor. When Enrique visited Cuba, two young men—Jose Rodriguez and Moises Hernandez—were consecrated as assistants to Juana. Now Moises is pastor of Nazareno. This work, which was formerly a "preaching point," is now registered with the government as the second Brethren in Christ congregation in Cuba!

For the last several years, funds have been transmitted from Canada to the church in Cuba. These funds helped in the support of Pastor Garcia, refurbishing the Cuatro Caminos church building, repairing the parsonage, and beginning a significant building project at Nazareno. What an encouragement it was to know that the church in Cuba is contributing generously to these projects. Furthermore, the Cuban government has graciously cooperated in helping the congregations to obtain quality paint and building supplies!



Maria Elena leads singing.

The sanctuary is beautiful and the exterior attractively painted. Six "made in Japan" fans moderate the tropical heat.

The Cuban Church bathes every service in prayer. Singing is enthusiastic. The youth organization is active. The children's Sunday school class is vivacious. The Brethren in Christ Church in Cuba is alive and well.

The Nation

The revolutionary government of Cuba implemented land reforms. Middle and upper class citizens lost some of their holdings. On the other side of the coin, while non-essentials were significantly curtailed, the essentials were shared throughout the populace. There is enough basic food for all. Begging is eliminated. There are schools for all the children, and illiteracy is well on the way to elimination.

Indeed the Cuban government is the advanced training locale for

hundreds of thousands of African students. It was a special joy to have several in-depth conversations with Ernest Munsanje, a Brethren in Christ student from Zambia who is training to be a medical doctor. Cuba has one of the best health-care programs in the developing world.

It is true that food is rationed in an effort to provide an adequate basic supply for all. Additional food may be purchased at higher prices for those with the resources to do so. People are generally well-dressed. There appears to be freedom of travel and a good transportation system throughout the island.

Tens of thousands of tourists enjoy the fine beaches and gracious hospitality of Cuba. The nation gains hard currency from its visitors and augments this process by providing "Dollar Stores" for them. Cubans may accompany their tourist friends and shop for imported articles which the visitors pay for in United States or Canadian currency. A contribution from the Missions Sewing Auxiliary provided much appreciated linens and housewares for Juana Garcia in this way.

Church and state relations

It was through the good offices of Raul Suarez that Juana Garcia was able to make the type of visa application that enabled Dorothy and me to minister in Cuba. Suarez serves ap-



A children's Sunday school class at Quatro Caminos.

proximately 53 different church groups in relations with the government. It was a pleasant surprise to meet a Cuban pastor who recently held a preaching mission about 25 miles from our home in Canada!

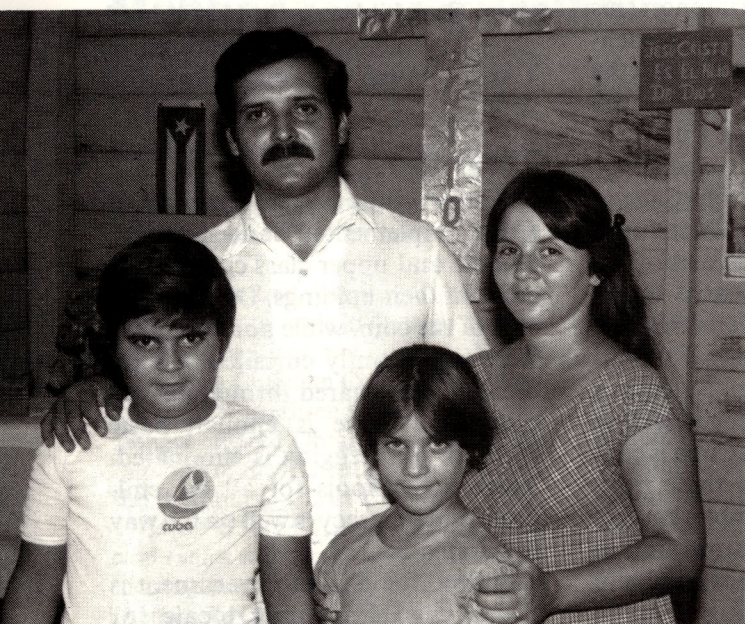
Suarez encouraged the Brethren in Christ Church of North America to apply for Cuban visas on an annual basis. He also spoke positively of Juana Garcia being able to visit the churches in Canada and respond favorably to an invitation from the Brethren in Christ Women's

Missionary Auxiliary there to address their 1986 annual meeting.

The Methodist Bishop of 100 Cuban congregations is especially helpful to Juana Garcia and the Brethren in Christ congregations. He appreciates the level of freedom with which the Cuban churches function. There have been reports of Christians experiencing discrimination in post-secondary education because of their Christian faith. In response to a question about this matter, the bishop stated that the current trend of the government is to consider favorably an appeal where local officials have shown this bias.

Cuba does not profess to be a Christian nation, but the church within it experiences a good measure of freedom and cooperation. In fact the Brethren in Christ, and other Cuban church officials, are optimistic that a request for the return of the school adjoining the Cuatro Caminos Church will be granted. If the school becomes available, it will provide much needed Sunday school and dining facilities.

It is appropriate that we pray for the people of Cuba, for their government, and for the living church of Jesus Christ in that nation. We as Brethren in Christ can be grateful for this privilege.



Moises and Margarita Hernandez and their children, Moises and Mirla.

God at work in our world

Roy and Nancy Larvingo

Ethel Bundy—Navajo Mission, New Mexico

Roy and Nancy Larvingo are both enrolled in Theological Education by Extension (TEE) studies. They share with a group that meets in town and are on their sixth book, having completed about 60 weeks of study. Roy's enthusiasm in mid-1984 was responsible for the starting of another TEE study group. He had invited the pastor to join with the town group for study. Instead the pastor came to the mission and asked if a group could be started at their church at Carson. This is the largest study group.

I think Roy is like Andrew who called his brother. His gift is witnessing one-to-one. More than one time he has been asked if he is a preacher. One day he was talking to a small group of people who asked him how he knew so much about the Bible. He said, "I have been studying TEE." "What's that?" The door was open for more witnessing.

Roy is an iron worker and often his work lasts three or four weeks at a time. He just finished three weeks at Santa Fe about 175 miles from here. However, last week in class his book was up-to-date. Last year in one such job he was sleeping in his car at night to save money. There was a church nearby and he attended their prayer meeting. They got on the subject of tithing and Roy was explaining it. After that they told him he could sleep in the church. This made him very happy.

Nancy is a teacher's aide at the local government school. She is a few hours away from receiving her BA degree from the University of New Mexico. Prior to her training she had worked at the mission as weekend supervisor of the girls, and later as a hospital aide.

Roy and Nancy's three teenage children all studied here at the mission school. They have kept themselves free from alcohol in spite of peer pressure. Both sons graduated from high school in 1985 and are attending the San Juan College in Farmington. Their daughter is in high school.

The Larvingos are purchasing a home built by the tribe in a housing project near the mission.

Roy says he would not be a Christian today if he had not attended school here

at the mission. He has been a member of the church board at the mission for a number of years. Ask God to direct him as he witnesses in the church and community. Ask God also to watch over their home and three teenage children.

Brethren in Christ in London

John and Margie Criswell—London, UK

For six weeks we have been getting used to our new culture and learning our responsibilities here at Ichthus Christian Fellowship.

We are living at Ichthus House, the center for the Fellowship. The network and church planting program of which we will be a part until July 1986, began on September 9th. There are 29 of us in the program—four Americans, one Argentinian, two Swedes, one Turk, one Australian, two Zambians and the rest British. Though we come from different ethnic and theological backgrounds, we all share a common commitment to Jesus Christ and a burden for church planting.

Ichthus is a fellowship that has been in existence only since 1974, when it began as a house group. In eight years they grew to 300 people, but within the last three years they have blossomed to about 1,000 people in 50 house groups and 14 area congregations all over south-east London. In these last three years, Ichthus has developed a reputation for church planting. Our task is to immerse ourselves in their program to learn from them what they have learned. In addition, working with British people is an excellent bridge for us into the culture.

Our involvement, though academic in part, is intensely practical as we engage in the planting of churches for Ichthus. Each networker is assigned to an area congregation from which to work. We have been assigned to Emmanuel Family Centre in Lower Sydenham. Our assignment there is to consolidate the congregation of about 70 in preparation for planting one, maybe two, congregations in conjunction with another congregation by next July.

This may be easier said than done. But at the same time, the people here have the motivation, the desire, and the tools to extend themselves in this way. Ichthus uses methods that are somewhat unconventional in the British culture,

but they seem to work. Door-to-door, street preaching, street drama, tent meetings, home Bible studies, working through friendships, and the appealing nature of a thriving and productive church are all methods which have been used here. Although we Brethren in Christ may eventually use approaches different from some of these, there is much we can learn.

Curt and Marti Byers are in London, settling in at Blackheath, another London ward. We are attempting to spend as much time together as possible now in order to build up our team. Curt will be busy as a part-time networker, part-time researcher and full-time husband and father while looking into possible locations for the new Brethren in Christ church we'll begin in August 1986.

The feeling in our Brethren in Christ team now is that our church will be very unique. Big cities have big problems and it takes big answers to solve them. We mean this in the sense of being more faithful to Jesus Christ. In a society where the church is irrelevant to the average person, where God seems distant, and where every form of evil attempts to reign, there is an acute need for new and relevant church structures, sound biblical teaching and preaching, effective social and evangelistic outreach, and development of a thriving community of believers who are maturing in Christ. Putting this all together in London will be unusual in our estimation.

The need for this kind of church was never more apparent than one Saturday night a few weeks ago. About 100 of us went up to the Leicester Square/Soho area to a Youth With A Mission/Ichthus Coffee House. This area is one of the worst in London, known for its crime, prostitution, pornography, and punk rockers. We went there to march through the streets singing choruses, to talk with the people, to say a good word for Jesus, and to let them know that we (and God) were there. After they recovered from their utter amazement that there were happy Christians among them, some were downright scornful toward us. But many actually seemed relieved that we were there. Many wanted to know who we were and why we had come. Their faces reflected pain, but in their eyes was a glimmer of hope. We kept asking ourselves, "How can we neglect these people who are hurting so?"

Hearing both sides of the story

by Daniel Epp-Tiessen

MALABALAY, the Philippines—Often North Americans hear two “different stories” about what is happening in Third World countries. The opposing stories may come, for example, from mission or service workers on one side and government or business officials on the other. “Who is telling the truth?” we may ask.

In 1984 Esther and I wrote a letter to the president of a large multinational agribusiness corporation, expressing our concerns about the company’s expansion program. In response, we were invited by top-ranking officials to hear “their side of the story.”

Several days later I spent a day and a half visiting small tribal farmers affected by the company’s acquisition of thousands of acres of land.

The following paragraphs may give some insight into why two stories are both told energetically as the real side. There are indeed two sides of the story.

Company: When we first entered the area, most of the land was vacant and unused.

Farmers: Much of the land did look unused, but that is because some of it was pasture for our goats, pigs and work animals. Also, because we can’t afford to buy fertilizer, a field must be allowed to rest and recuperate after several crops of corn. Several hundred families depended on the land for their livelihood. Some land was vacant, but that is because the wealthy absentee landowners didn’t bother tilling it.

Daniel and Esther Epp-Tiessen are serving under MCC assignment in the Philippines.



Daniel Epp-Tiessen

An employee of a large multinational corporation picks ripe pineapples.

Company: Many of the people living in the area were just squatters. They did not have legal titles to the land.

Farmers: Why do we need a piece of paper to say we are owners of the land our people have always lived on? A few of us who could afford the fare, did make repeated trips to the government land office in the provincial capital to apply for titles, but after a while we had no more money or energy to fight the bureaucratic red tape.

Company: Many of the people were happy to sign agreements leasing their land to us.

Farmers: Yes, many of us did lease willingly, especially farmers whose land had lost its fertility and those who owned land but did not make their living farming. The company knew its offer to pay three to five years' rent in advance would be irresistible to poor tribal farmers who had never seen so much money before. But most of us are not used to a cash economy and have never learned to budget. We spent the money within a year and were left with no source of income.

Company: We hired respected community leaders who knew the area and the people to act as our agents.

Farmers: The company paid local political leaders and other agents a big commission for each acre of land they could persuade us to sign over to the company. In our culture we have a deep respect for authority, and so it was very difficult for us to refuse the aggressive agents.

Company: It is true that virtually none of the Binukid-speaking farmers could read or understand the long, complex English lease agreements we asked them to sign. But this is the kind of contract the government



A farm crew threshes a newly-harvested crop.

Daniel Epp-Tiessen

requires. Our agents spelled out the contents to each farmer before he signed.

Farmers: The agents were often so eager to earn commissions that they didn't explain exactly what we were signing.

Company: Once some of the land had been leased, we fenced it to keep out squatters and then pastured our cattle on it until we could plant it. Some security guards were stationed in the area to prevent theft.

Farmers: The company's armed security guards occasionally threatened us, and told us it was useless to hold out against a powerful and wealthy corporation. Company cattle were sometimes chased onto our fields.

Company: Any farmer who leased his land to us was promised a job on the plantation. Unfortunately, a few had to be terminated after several months because they could not adapt to the discipline of the job.

Farmers: After being our own bosses and keeping our own hours for so many years, we found it hard to adjust to the rigid work schedule of the company. A number of us, including healthy young men, were laid off without being told why. We think the company's promise of employment was just a tactic to persuade us to lease our land.

Esther and I learned several things from hearing "both sides of the story."

First, upper management is sometimes unaware of and sometimes turns a blind eye to what over-enthusiastic employees are doing. This, of course, does not absolve the company of responsibility.

Mistreatment and oppression of the farmers is not necessarily deliberate. The problem is that even though the corporate executives may be Filipinos, their upper class background, their Western-oriented education, and their position with a multinational corporation make it virtually impossible for them to understand the life of the small farmer.

The entry of a multinational corporation into a traditional society creates an inevitable clash of cultures. The local people have one set of values and perceptions; the company is a very different one.

Finally, the victor in this clash is not hard to guess. As long as profit is the primary motive, and as long as important matters like expansion into new land are decided upon in distant boardrooms, multinational corporations will continue to overshadow the feelings, values, and hopes of Third World people. ■

“The church has the power
to transform the world.
The church's power is its
people, poor farmers
together reading the Bible,
praying, discerning the
Scriptures and then acting
according to the Scriptures.”

Francisco Claver, Philippine church leader and friend of MCC

Learning from those with whom we work.



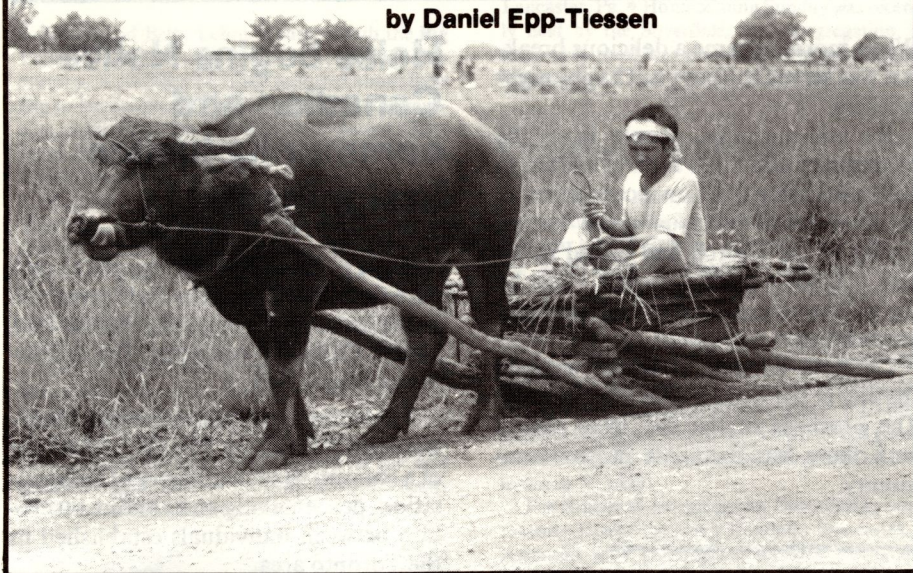
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Models for development: Tractors or water buffaloes?

by Daniel Epp-Tiessen



Dan Epp-Tiessen

Water buffaloes perform numerous tasks for Filipino farmers.

We frequently take late afternoon walks. One of our favorite routes takes us past a branch office of the Development Bank of the Philippines.

In front of this bank is a row of more than 30 tractors, all repossessed by the bank. In addition to each tractor, the bank also acquired 120 acres of land, which was the minimum collateral needed to take out a tractor loan.

These tractors symbolize what one might call the technological model of development. Technology is extremely important to Western economy and society. "Western technology promises prosperity" is the gospel proclaimed by many development experts.

The World Bank and other Western aid programs have initiated a campaign to modernize Third World agriculture. Institutions like the Development Bank of the Philippines have received vast sums of money so that farmers can obtain loans to buy this technology. The row of tractors indicates that this technology has not brought the promised prosperity.

Because of their faith in technology, many Filipino farmers in the past ten years have bought tractors.

Both farmers and bankers were optimistic about the potential for increased production and income. But development planners failed to foresee the overall effect of widespread implementation of this technological model for development.

Purchases of new technology by Philippine industry soon racked up enormous foreign debts and drained the local economy of cash. The resulting currency devaluations made spare parts and petroleum products outrageously expensive. Tractors and other machines became less and less economically viable.

The technological model of development raises some important moral questions apart from the economic implications. This model is basically designed to benefit the wealthy. The 120 acres needed as collateral for a tractor loan is already a very big farm compared to the four- to ten-acre plot of the common farmer.

One of the first things a large landowner with a new tractor will do is to get rid of the tenants who used to till the soil. Then he will buy more land to make the expensive new tractor pay off. This leaves even more people landless and jobless.

When the technological model succeeds, it generally benefits the rich at the expense of the poor. When it fails, even the rich are made poor.

The money spent on importing a \$30,000 tractor, not including fuel and spare parts, could easily employ a full-time farm laborer for 60 years. Money spent to hire a worker circulates within the Philippine economy and benefits Filipinos, while money spent importing tractors drains the local economy and benefits manufacturers in the West.

Traditional Philippine agriculture relies on the slow-moving but dependable water buffalo. This versatile work animal can drag a harrow through the knee-deep mud of a rice paddy, carry a heavy load up a slippery mountain path or pull a cart of produce to market.

The water buffalo is native to the Philippines. It does not increase the foreign debt because it does not require scarce foreign exchange to purchase, nor imported fuel to run. A water buffalo is not cheap by local standards, but is still within the reach of most small farmers.

The water buffalo does not contribute to the concentration of land in the hands of a few. A farmer with a water buffalo and a few acres of land has a chance to survive. Nor does this gentle beast create unemployment; many farmers earn money using their water buffaloes to plow, cultivate or haul for others.

Development planners have hardly even considered tapping the potential of the water buffalo. Little effort has been made to design agricultural equipment suited to the water buffalo, something which could easily improve the productivity of small farmers. Nor is there an aid program to assist poor farmers in acquiring this all-important work animal. Instead, the World Bank promotes tractors, which only a few can own and benefit from.

The Philippines is poor in capital but rich in labor—both human and water buffalo. A development strategy should build on a nation's strength, not its weakness. ■

Church News

"Apple Butter Celebration" at West Shore Church

On November 9, many hands were busy preparing for a great day of activity at West Shore Brethren in Christ Church, Enola, Pa.

Fifteen bushels of apples were peeled the night before by machines and by hand. The kettles of apples were ready to start cooking at midnight and were kept boiling for hours. Our young people, so willing to help, kept stirring.

When morning came a delicious breakfast was served to sleepy but happy night workers.

By mid-morning, people from the community and miles around started to come, bringing their own containers to be filled with delicious apple butter. Ladies of the church had baked many pies, cakes and cookies for sale. Cider by the gallon was sold as well as soup and sandwiches.

Children as well as adults enjoyed sharing in the work of this new venture. The proceeds of the day were shared with those less fortunate in our community.

Heise begins Native Canadian and community justice assignments

Evan L. Heise has been named to two part-time MCC Ontario staff positions in the areas of Community Justice and Native Canadian concerns. The assignments began Nov. 1.

The community justice project, Scarborough Mediation Centre, grows out of a concern to see a ministry of reconciliation, peacemaking and conflict resolution between individuals established in the Toronto area.

In developing the project, Heise will likely draw on the models of existing Kitchener projects, such as the Victim Offender Reconciliation Project or the Community Mediation Centre, both of which offer alternative ways of dealing with conflict, based on a Christian perspective.

As Native Concerns Worker, Heise's role will be to make and maintain contact with representatives of Ontario Native communities and organizations, exploring ways in which MCC Ontario can assist them in realizing their community development objectives. He will be active in developing awareness in our churches of the issues Native Canadians face and will seek to give advocacy support to Native groups seeking just access to their rightful place within Canadian society. The Native Concerns Committee of MCC Ontario will monitor and guide this project.

Evan Heise, who is a member of the Brethren in Christ church, brings to these new positions a long history of MCC experience beginning with three years of agricultural extension work in Zaire in the early 70's. From 1979 to 1982 he and his wife, Linda Epp Heise, were program directors of MCC Atlantic Provinces. This past summer they and their two children returned from a further three years in community development work in India.



Twenty-fifth anniversary at Fellowship Chapel

The Fellowship Chapel congregation, celebrated twenty-five years of ministry in the Bronx, New York, in a great weekend of activities July 12-14, 1985.

Nearly 100 persons attended the opening night banquet at the Williamsbridge Inn; the evening of food, praise, fellowship and the Word continued till midnight!

Friends, former members, leaders and associates were represented from far and near. The Lord was particularly gracious in making it possible for all the past and present pastors (see photo) and bishops (C. B. Byers, H. A. Ginder, John A. Byers) serving in the 1960-1985 period to be present during the weekend. The four former pastors each gave a message of encouragement and forward-looking faith to the various audiences

Friday through Sunday. Each was introduced through the testimony of a Fellowship Chapel member whose spiritual life was specifically aided by the ministry of that pastor.

Music, always warm and plentiful at Fellowship Chapel, was provided by chapel choirs and soloists, a pastors' quintet, ladies from Pilgrim Chapel (Brooklyn), and the Jack Maldonado family.

The summary statement of Pastor Henry Miller, serving the congregation since February 1, 1985 was this; "The ministry of Fellowship Chapel is measured more by people and changed lives than by years. We gather on this anniversary occasion to declare to one another God's work, and God's grace. We honor Him for the people whom He chose to do His work; and we honor Him for the life which even now flows out from His church in this community."



The five pastors who have served Fellowship Chapel sing at the 25th anniversary celebration. (From left): Henry Miller, Daniel Farina, Terry Brensinger, Paul Hill, and Alvin Book.

Congregational News Notes

Allegheny Conference

Simon and Betty Lehman shared with the **Big Valley** congregation, Belleville, Pa., on Thursday evening, November 14. They reported about their trip to Nicaragua. • The **Cedar Heights** congregation, Mill Hall, Pa., reports their pastor, Rev. John Bundy, held revival services in the Beech Creek Wesleyan Church.

Members of the **Five Forks** congregation, Waynesboro, Pa., have been challenged to become one of the pastor's prayer partners for 1986. • A special congregational talent night was held by the **Hanover**, Pa., congregation recently. • The **Iron Springs** congregation, Fairfield, Pa., hosted a joint hymn sing with the **Five Forks** congregation.

The **Locust Grove** congregation (York, Pa.) held a farewell service Sept. 1 for Rev. and Mrs. Barton Starr, who served as the interim pastoral couple for three years. In the evening, Rev. and Mrs. Gilbert Gomez were installed as the new pastoral couple. Bishop Emeritus Henry A. Ginder officiated at the installation.



Mildred and Barton Starr; Gilbert, Mary Ann and Julie Gomez

Fall revival services were held November 17-24 by the **Martinsburg**, Pa., congregation. Rev. Barton Starr was the evangelist. • On December 1-8, the **Mt. Rock** congregation, Shippensburg, Pa., held spiritual renewal services. Dr. Henry Ginder was the speaker. • The guest speaker was Rev. Charles McDonald from Nebraska, for the **Springhope**, Pa., congregation's revival services on October 7-13.

Atlantic Conference

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Garling, Waynesboro, Pa., observed their 60th wedding anniversary on October 8, 1985, by attending a dinner which was hosted by their four children and their spouses: Glenn and Marie Garling, Arlene and Charles Lehman, Lauren and Sandy Garling, and Janet and Ernie Brockman. The couple also have five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Members of the couple's congregation, Fairview Avenue Brethren in Christ Church, held a surprise card shower for them.

The **Elizabethtown**, Pa., congregation observed Sunday, November 10 as missions Sunday. A phone conversation was held with Bob and Carol Geiger during the service. The Geigers are missionaries in Bogota, Columbia. • Dr. Donald Zook was the featured speaker for the annual missions rally of the **Free Grace** congregation, Millersburg, Pa., on November 9 and 10. Other missionary guests included Gary and Nancy Potteiger, Shirley Heisey, Kathy Kennedy, and Steve Meck.

A visual presentation, "Who Are the Brethren

in Christ?" was given to the **Pequea** congregation, Lancaster, Pa. • Homecoming Sunday was recently held by the **Silverdale**, Pa., congregation. A fellowship meal was held following the morning service.

Canadian Conference

The **Bertie**, Ont., congregation reports that Lorne Ruegg was chosen as deacon for another five-year term. • Roy V. Sider was the speaker for the **Bridlewood** congregation, Agincourt, Ont., for Anniversary Sunday held on November 17. Special music was given by Norman Engel.

The Toronto Presbyterian Male Choir presented a sacred music concert to the **Heise Hill** congregation, Gormley, Ont. A time of fellowship and refreshments followed the concert. • Church planters Craig and Laura Sider were special guests of the **Houghton** congregation, Langton, Ont., for missions Sunday.

The **Rosebank** congregation, Petersburg, Ont., recently viewed the Tony Campolo film series. • Activities were planned for all ages during the **Wainfleet**, Ont., congregation. Missionaries participating were Walter and Mildred Lehman, Lois Jean Sider, Tim and Martha Giles, Louis Cober, Mary Heisey, and Kathy Kennedy.

Central Conference

Guest speaker for the **Ashland**, Oh., congregation Nov. 10 was Dr. Kenneth Walther. Dr. Walther is Professor of Greek and New Testament at Ashland Theological Seminary. • The **Christian Union** congregation, Garrett, In., hosted a Michigan teacher training seminar. Ken Letner directed the seminar.

Dr. Walter Winger gave a series on "The Kingdom of Right Relationships" in the **Pleasant Hill**, Oh., Church on November 15-17. • A special service was held on Thanksgiving morning by the **Union Grove** congregation, New Paris, In.

Revival services were held recently by the **Western Hills** congregation, Cincinnati, Oh. Rev. Henry Chafin was the evangelist.

Midwest Conference

A recent guest speaker for the **Mountain View** congregation, Colorado Springs, Co., was Bob Nebeker. Mr. Nebeker is a lay minister from the Northeast Bible Chapel.

Thursday evening, November 14 was Neighbor Night for the **Rosebank** congregation, Hope, Ks. The Buhler Quartet presented special music. • The **Zion Church**, Abilene, Ks., hosted a dinner meeting for those interested in outreach and evangelism. The Board of Evangelism and Church Planting was in charge.

Pacific Conference

Recent guests of the **Labish** congregation, Salem, Or., were Ed and Bonnie Weyrick. The Weyricks, missionaries to Kenya, shared a multimedia production to the church.

The **Open Bible**, Sunnyside, Ca., and **Riverside**, Ca., congregations held a joint evening wor-

ship service recently. The service was held at Sunnyside with Riverside in charge of the service.

Rally Day was held by the Children's Department of the **Upland**, Ca., congregation on Sunday, November 17. An open house was held prior to a program given by Susan Gift Porter, a Christian ventriloquist.

For the Record

Births

Benjamin: Sarah Rose, August 10; Jamie and Mary Ann Benjamin, Mountain View congregation, Co.

Brooks: Brandon Jermaine, February 22; Bill and Catherine Brooks, Walkersville congregation, Md.

Brugh: Daniel Robert, November 14; Dan and Marsha Brugh, Van Lear congregation, Md.

Burkholder: Austin Jay, October 17; Evan and Lori (Bauman) Burkholder, New Guilford congregation, Pa.

deJonge: Sheraya Marlene, November 6; Levi and Pauline deJonge, Ridgemount congregation, Ont.

Deter: Amanda Mary, October 19; Henry and Pat Deter, Cross Roads congregation, Guelph, Ont.

Doolittle: Heidi Suzanne, October 23; David and Suzanne Doolittle, Manor congregation, Pa.

Ellicott: Jane Kristine, October 16; Jim and Kathi Ellicott, Morrison congregation, Il.

Ensminger: Cherise Danae, June 26; Lewis and Marcia Ensminger, Walkersville congregation, Md.

Falls: Jason Adam, November 17; Dave and Denise (Robb) Falls, Cedar Heights, Pa.

Funk: Ashley Nichole, October 11; Scott and Celesta Funk, Millersville congregation, Pa.

Graham: Ashley Lauren, November 1; Scott and Judy Graham, Manor congregation, Pa.

Hawkins: Trevor Eric, November 11; Doug and Cheryl Hawkins, Bertie congregation, Ont.

Hepworth: Tiffany Elizabeth Marie, October 10; Rev. and Mrs. David Hepworth, DeRossett congregation, Tn.

Hunsberger: Nathan Joel, November 4; David and Christina Hunsberger, Cedar Grove congregation, Pa.

Hutcheson: Christopher Glen Arthur, August 19; Bruce and Peggy Hutcheson, Westheights congregation, Ont.

Kaegel: Abby Lynn, September 11; Sid and Rhonda Kaegel, Cedar Grove congregation, Pa.

Mabee: Holly Dawn, October 8; Scott and Suzie Mabee, Houghton congregation, Ont.

Macham: Jessalyn Mae Elizabeth, October 23, Tom and Laura Macham, Stayner congregation, Ont.

Martin: Shelly Nicole, October 30; Joe and Debbie Martin, Cedar Grove congregation, Pa.

McMillen: Tiffany Lynn, October 31; Breston II and Lori McMillen, Air Hill congregation, Pa.

Railing: Benjamin, October 22; Alan and Kathleen Railing, Pequea congregation, Pa.

Texter: Jarred Scott, October 22; Bruce and Carla Texter, Manor congregation, Pa.

White: Miriam Kristiyahna, July 18; Archie and Sheron White, Walkersville congregation, Md.

Witter: Eric Lee, October 26; Rev. Kevin and Marie (Rothermel) Witter, Chambersburg congregation, Pa.

Worman: Rachel Ann and Alison Lee, November 18; Craig and Diana Worman, Hong Kong.

Yarchin: Mitchell Carroll, October 27; Bill and Ann Yarchin, Upland congregation, Ca.

Zuck: Amy Beth, October 9; Jim and Nancy Zuck, Elizabethtown congregation, Pa.

Weddings

Brubaker-Shearer: Margaret, daughter of John A. Shearer Jr. and the late Ethel Shearer, and Dwain, son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Brubaker,

October 19 in the Centre Lutheran Church with Rev. Glenn Heasley officiating.

Cook-Sandifer: Deborah Jean, daughter of Mrs. Betty A. Frank, Richmond, Va. and Bruce S. Sandifer, Harrisburg, Pa., and Darryl Eugene, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert R. Cook, Harrisburg, Pa., November 16 in the Skyline View Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. John Reitz officiating.

Eichelberger-Walke: Judy Arlene Walke, Shipensburg, Pa., and Walter Terry Eichelberger, New Cumberland, Pa., November 2, in the Shipensburg University Chapel with Rev. John Schock officiating.

Garver-Engle: Rebecca, daughter of Mahlon and Irene Engle, Lebanon, Pa. (formerly Abilene, Ks.), and Howard E. Garver, son of Lona Garver and the late Howard Garver Sr., Kinzers, Pa., June 1 in Messiah College Church with Rev. Dale Engle, brother of the bride, officiating.

Grove-Slick: Susan Carol, daughter of John and Fannie Slick, and Alan Keith, son of James and Virginia Grove, November 9 in the Chambersburg Brethren in Christ Church with Revs. A. Graybill Brubaker and Vernon Stoops officiating.

Herr-Shenk: Hilda Mae Shenk, and Christian H. Herr, September 7 in Cross Roads Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Dale H. Engle officiating.

Kroeker-Hite: Cassandra Stewart, daughter of Lawrence and Karen Hite, and Gary Dean, son of Richard and Alice Kroeker, August 10 in the Labish Brethren in Christ Church with the Revs. Stan Norman and David Croxford officiating.

Mattern-Groff: Diane, daughter of Clayton and Elsie Groff, Conestoga, Pa., and Bruce, son of Ronald and Delores Mattern, Williamsport, Pa., July 27 in the Pequea Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Gerald Wingert officiating.

Mower-Burgess: Sherry Burgess and Peter Mower, October 12 in the Van Lear Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Terry Hoke officiating.

Trimble-Charles: Linda J., daughter of Raymond and Florence Charles, Lancaster, Pa., and G. Lamar, son of William and Elizabeth Trimble, Lancaster, Pa., June 8 in the Pequea Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Gerald Wingert officiating.

Unruh-Shaub: Stacy L., daughter of Sandra Brakefield, S. Carolina, and Donald Shaub, Pequea, Pa., and David H., son of Dave and Sandy Unruh, Pequea, Pa., September 14 in the Pequea Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Gerald Wingert officiating.

Whitten-White: Kim White, Troy, Oh., and Tony Whitten, October 19 in the Pleasant Hill Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Tim Herr officiating.

Yoder-Schindel: Julie Marie Schindel, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Donald Semler, and Douglas Allen, son of Mr. and Mrs. Allen Yoder, September 14 in the Van Lear Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Terry Hoke officiating.

Zembower-Leister: Laura Leister and Eric Zembower, October 26 in the Church of the Brethren, Bedford, Pa., with Rev. Kenneth K. Mackie officiating.

Obituaries

Dozier: Ruth Bowers Dozier, born September 10, 1906, in Abilene, Ks., died October 23, 1985, in Santa Cruz, Ca. She is survived by one son, Leslie, and a granddaughter. She was a faculty member

stewardship

Banner Contest

If you have not received information from your regional conference with rules for the banner contest, contact your bishop. Even though the suggested deadline for registering for the contest was January 1, 1986, that has been extended. Please get the proper registration blank and send it in as soon as possible.

Clarification: All banners made will be in the processional at General Conference, and all banners will be displayed at General Conference. However, only the first prize winners at each regional conference will be in the running for the six prizes at General Conference.

Every congregation is urged to participate. If you are unable to obtain the contest rules, contact the Stewardship and Finance Office very soon. The address: P.O. Box 450, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-0450.

The Macedonian Vision

Through numerous missionary rallies, Sunday school lessons, and sermons, we have heard about the Macedonian call:

During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us" (Acts 16:9).

What is more, because Paul responded to that call, most of us have ultimately been the beneficiaries and have received the gospel.

But what about the Macedonian vision?

In the course of our normal development as Christians, we begin to focus more on the needs of others and less on our own. This happened to the group of new Christians which emerged from Paul's ministry in Macedonia. Later Paul was able to say:

You became imitators of us and of the Lord . . . You became a model to all the believers in Macedonia (1 Thess. 1:6-7).

. . . in fact, you do love all the brothers throughout Macedonia (1 Thess. 4:10).

And their growth continued:

. . . they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us . . . they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing . . . they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability (2 Cor. 8:3-5).

These early Christians caught a vision of sharing with others the gospel, themselves, and their material resources.

Gratefully, many Brethren in Christ have also caught the Macedonian vision. They are not content to only tithe; they give a double or triple tithe. Some give half their incomes. And a select few give "even beyond their ability."

Allowing our love for the Lord to express itself in this way can bring unspeakable joy. — *Dr. David P. McBeth, executive director, Stewardship and Finance USA.*

of Jabbok Bible School and Upland College and also worked at Life Line Mission in San Francisco, Ca. A memorial service was held in Bible Missionary Church, Santa Cruz.

Cutman: Roy A. Cutman, Halifax, Pa., born July 21, 1901, died October 1, 1985. He is survived by two sons: Luther W., and Allen B.; a stepson, Ernest Myers; 4 foster daughters: Margaret Dunkel, Joyce Romberger, Helen King and Ada Seiders; 3 sisters; a brother; 22 grandchildren; and 21 great-grandchildren. He was a member of the Free Grace Brethren in Christ Church. Rev. Charles R. Burgard conducted the memorial service. Interment was in Free Grace Cemetery.

Fricker: Abram Fricker, Morton, Pa., born October 2, 1875, died November 14, 1985. He was married to Marie Stuckey who preceded him in death in 1975. He is survived by a son, Harry D.; a grandson; and two great-grandchildren. He was a member of the Lancaster Brethren in Christ Church where the funeral service was conducted by Rev. Andrew Lowe.

Heise: Ada Baker Heise, born March 5, 1891, near Stayner, Ont., died October 20, 1985, in Stouffville, Ont. In 1913 she was married to Joseph Heise who preceded her in death in 1970. She is survived by 2 sons: Rev. J. Allen and Russel; 13 grandchildren; and 29 great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by two daughters: Marion Hall and Ruth. She was a member of the Heise Hill Brethren in Christ Church where the funeral service was conducted by Rev. Marlin K. Ressler.

Hile: Katherine M. Hile, Harrisburg, Pa., born August 6, 1927, died November 6, 1985. She is the daughter of Brook and Katherine Potteiger who survive. Also surviving are her husband, Jerry, and a son, James. She was a member of the Skyline View Brethren in Christ Church where the funeral service was conducted by Rev. John Reitz.

Johnson: Anna H. Johnson, Fayetteville, Pa., born June 4, 1911, died October 31, 1985. She was the daughter of Albain and Orpha Newcome Johnson. She is survived by a brother, Willard. She was a member of the New Guilford Brethren in Christ Church. The funeral service was conducted by Rev. Maurice Bender. Interment was in Temple Cemetery, Hazen, Pa.

Kelley: Pauline A. Kelley, Mifflin, Pa., died November 1, 1985, at the age of 78. She is survived by her husband, Dervin J. Kelley; 4 sons: James Shilling, Harold, Dervin Jr., and Russell; 3 daughters: Mrs. William Zea, Mrs. Ralph Swartz, and Mrs. Robert Kline; 2 brothers; a step-brother; 3 sisters; 14 grandchildren; and 11 great-grandchildren. She was a member of the Cedar Grove Brethren in Christ Church. Revs. Eugene Heidler and Paul Isaacs conducted the funeral service. Interment was in McCullochs Mills Cemetery.

Markel: Paulette C. Markel, Elizabethville, Pa., born July 21, 1964, died October 21, 1985. She was the daughter of Paul and Nancy Markel who survive. Also surviving are two sisters: Wanda S. Dagan and Cindy L. Reiner; and maternal grandmother, Catherine E. Hoffner. Revs. C. R. Burgard and Luke L. Keefer Sr. conducted the memorial service in the Free Grace Brethren in Christ Church. Interment was in Free Grace Cemetery.

Peachey: Merle W. Peachey, Mifflintown, Pa., born May 4, 1913, died October 13, 1985, in Lewistown, Pa., Hospital. He was the son of Ezra and Ella Stoltzfus Peachey. On May 21, 1936, he married Mary Kanagy who survives. Also surviving are three sons: M. Richard, Gary D., and John

MMA to introduce Children's Wellness Program

Children learn through play—and so do we. Come play and work and learn at a Wellness Celebration introducing the new Mennonite Mutual Aid Children's Wellness Program.

Laurie Bertsche, children's health educator for MMA, and Mark Potuck, entertainer and health educator for Elkhart County, Ind., will be the featured presentors. Humor as a teaching tool will be highlighted. Come learn some techniques for working with children of all ages.

This celebration will be held at the Neffsville Mennonite Church near Lancaster, Pa., on Sunday, February 9, 1986, from 2:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The church is located on Route 501 about 2 miles north of the Lancaster Route 30

Bypass. Please bring a small portion of finger food to share in the evening meal. Beverage will be provided.

The Children's Wellness Program follows the same course outline as the adult series and is designed to be offered in concert with the adult series so that entire families can participate in a congregational wellness program.

All persons concerned about wellness and especially those interested in the MMA Wellness Program are welcome to attend. Information will be available at this meeting concerning a Wellness Resource Training Program at Kenbrook Bible Camp on May 9-11, 1986.

Call the Lancaster MMA office at (717) 394-0769 for more information concerning this meeting.

L.; two daughters: Nancy Zimmerman and Anna M. Peachey; two brothers; two sisters; ten grandchildren; and a great-grandchild. He served as pastor of the Millerfields, Ky., and Saville, Pa., Brethren in Christ Churches. The funeral service was conducted in the Cedar Grove Church by Revs. M. Eugene Heidler, Paul Isaacs, and Wilbur Benner. Interment was in the Cedar Grove Cemetery.

Peters: Donald Peters, Port Royal, Pa., born June 19, 1917, died October 10, 1985. He was the son of Edward and Margaret Haffley Peters. He was married to Maxine Burd who survives. Also surviving are a son, Walter; three daughters: Dorothy Hosler, Patricia Bailor and Donna Small; three sisters; six brothers; and ten grandchildren. He was a member of the Cedar Grove Brethren in Christ Church where the funeral service was conducted by Revs. M. Eugene Heidler and Paul Isaacs. Interment was in Union Cemetery.

Peters: Wayne R. Peters, Manheim, Pa., born January 30, 1900, died August 20, 1985. He was the son of Benjamin and Hettie Rohrer Peters. He was married to Amanda Ginder who preceded him in death in 1926. He later married Minnie Faus who also preceded him in death in 1973. Also preceding him in death was a son, Roy, and a daughter, Anna Grace. He is survived by three sons: Earl G., Jesse F., and James F., two daughters: Eva Mae, and Hettie Shenk; ten grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; and a sister. He was a member of the Mastersonville Brethren in Christ Church where he served as a trustee, Sunday school superintendent and board member. Revs. Steven Martin and Arthur Brubaker conducted the memorial service in the Mastersonville Church. Interment was in the adjoining cemetery.

Schneider: Vernon (Cecil) Schneider, Merrill, Mi., born April 19, 1914, in Carland, Mi., died November 22, 1985. He was the son of Rev. Henry and May Rose Schneider. In 1937 he married Leola Williams who died in 1960. He married Merle Ann Staley who survives. Also surviving are two daughters: Lee Ann Williams and Mary O. Davidson; a son, David L.; a stepdaughter, Sally Sellek; a stepson, Dan Staley; two sisters: Fern Ulery and Olive Schneider; a brother, Gordon

Schneider; nine grandchildren; and four step-grandchildren. The funeral service was conducted by Rev. George Van Norman. Interment was in Roselawn Memorial Gardens.

Thompson: Jay Thompson, Mifflintown, Pa., born December 26, 1932, died October 4, 1985, in the Lewistown, Pa., Hospital. He was the son of Walter and Ida Swanger Thompson. He was married to Erma Warner who survives. Also surviving are two daughters: Laura and JaLene; two brothers: Lawrence and Wayne; and two sisters: Mrs. Doris Gill and Mrs. Nellie Jones. Revs. M. Eugene Heidler, Paul Isaacs, and Kenneth Hepner conducted the funeral service. Interment was in Cedar Grove Cemetery.

Thompson: Mary Mae Thompson, born November 15, 1902, died November 14, 1985. She is survived by four sons: Arthur B., E. Edward, Clinton R., and Calvin R. She was a member of the Mechanicsburg Brethren in Christ Church. Rev. C. R. Burgard conducted the memorial service. Interment was in Haven Rest Park, Shireleysburg, Pa.

Watkins: Sylvia Watkins, Stevensville, Ont., born November 26, 1896, died November 11, 1985. She was married to William Hawkins who preceded her in death in 1953. She then married Ben Watkins who preceded her in death in 1981. She is survived by 4 sons: Lewis, Lloyd, Lyle and Lorne; 5 daughters: Beulah Eberly, Hazel Sibbold, Mary Everett, Jean House, and Norma Hill; 3 stepchildren: Bill Watkins, Dolly Eckart and Thelma Bartmas; 36 grandchildren; 49 great-grandchildren; and 2 great-great-grandchildren. Revs. Greg Funk and Arthur Heise conducted the funeral service in the Bertie Brethren in Christ Church. Interment was in the Bertie Cemetery.

Wingert: Mary Brechbill Wingert, Chambersburg, Pa., born October 29, 1910, died October 3, 1985. She was the daughter of George W. and Minnie Brechbill Wingert. She is survived by two sisters: Catherine Deeter and Ruth B. Wingert; and three brothers: Levi B., George B., and Paul B. She was a member of the New Guilford Brethren in Christ Church. Rev. Maurice Bender and Bishop Frank Kipe conducted the funeral service. Interment was in the New Guilford Cemetery.

Messiah College News

Olford, Coleman to lead ministers conference

A pair of distinguished authors and Christian leaders will be the keynote speakers for the 21st annual Messiah College Ministers Conference to be held February 11 and 12 at the Grantham Brethren in Christ Church on the college campus.

Dr. Stephen F. Olford will speak throughout the sessions on various aspects of preaching the Word. The president of Encounter Ministries, Inc. of Memphis, Tenn., Dr. Olford was trained in England, and has held pastorates there and in the United States.

His radio program, *Encounter*, has made his voice familiar to many in the last 25 years. The author of more than 20 books and pamphlets, Dr. Olford initiated the Institute of Biblical Preaching in 1980 to provide practical training for the Christian ministry.

His goals are "to see expository preaching restored to the pulpit, spiritual revival renew the church, mobilized evangelism impact the masses, and righteousness and social justice exalt our nation."

Dr. Robert E. Coleman is a professor of evangelism and director of the School of World Mission and Evangelism at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois.

He has authored more than a dozen books on evangelism and church renewal, including *The Master Plan of Evangelism*. For the past two years, he has been chairman of the North American Lausanne Committee for World Evangelism. He is also president of Christian Outreach, a service organization committed to discipleship resource development.

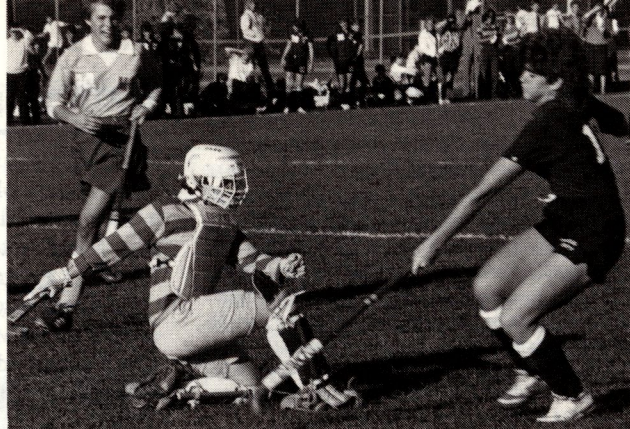
Dr. Coleman will give a three-part talk on "The Triumph of the Church," and lead a seminar on "Lifestyle Evangelism in the Local Church."

For more information, contact Program Director Dr. Luke Keefer Jr., Messiah College, Grantham, PA 17027; phone 717-766-2511.

Fine Arts Festival planned

"Oxford Christian Writers" will be the theme of the 1986 Fine Arts Festival to be held Jan. 28-30. Sharing his expertise on the life and writings of C. S. Lewis will be Dr. Thomas T. Howard, author of several books, including *The Novels of Charles Williams*, *The Achieve-*

Annette Mullen, a junior from Roseglen, Pa. makes a kick save in field hockey action last fall.



ment of C. S. Lewis, and Evangelical Is Not Enough.

Dr. Howard will speak on "The Achievement of C. S. Lewis" at chapel Jan. 28, and will have lunch in the dining room with interested faculty and students. That evening the recently released film "C. S. Lewis" will be shown. It tells the heart-warming story of how the Christian author's faith was tested to the breaking point when his wife suffered and died from cancer.

The Jan. 30 chapel talk by Dr. Nancy M. Tischler, director of summer sessions for Pennsylvania State University, Main Campus, will be titled "Dorothy L. Sayers: Making Good Out of Evil."

Dr. Tischler, national president of the Conference on Christianity and Literature, will shed light on Sayers, author of the Lord Peter Wimsey mystery stories aired on PBS-TV, and of the play cycle, "The Man Born to Be King."

Dr. Tischler will have lunch in the private dining room for interested faculty and students.

Then "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe," a film from *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C. S. Lewis, will conclude the festival that evening.

Falcons enjoy banner fall

It was hard for Messiah students to stop cheering last fall as all five Falcon intercollegiate sports teams posted a winning record! Ten Falcons were chosen to Middle Atlantic Conference all-star teams as the squads—field hockey, soccer, women's volleyball and men's and women's cross country—combined for a winning percentage of 71.6.

Annette Mullen, a junior goalie from Roseglen, Pa. (Roseglen congregation), was named an all-star in field hockey. A nursing major, she posted 10 shutouts, including five in a row, in leading Messiah to a 17-4 record. Ranked fifth nationally among NCAA Division III schools, the Falcons lost to eventual champion Trenton State in the quarter-finals of the NCAA tournament.

Other field hockey players named all-stars are senior Cecelia Gebhart, New Oxford, Pa.; junior Jennifer Terranova, New Hyde Park, N.Y.; junior Julie Esh, Intercourse, Pa.; and sophomore Tara Boyer, Souderton, Pa.

Another Brethren in Christ student on the field hockey team was senior Diane Peterman, Carlisle, Pa. (Carlisle congregation).

Another goalie, sophomore Steve Brandt, Mechanicsburg, Pa. (Grantham congregation), led the Falcon soccer team to a 14-3-1 record and a number 10 ranking near the end of the season among Division III schools. He established a school record by posting eight consecutive shutouts within a nine-game win streak.

Brandt, a computer science major, is the son of Melva and Dr. H. David Brandt, academic dean at Messiah.

Also named soccer all-stars were senior Chuck Hooper, Paradise, Pa., and junior Scot Goodling, Richfield, Pa. Also participating was junior Lande Ndeble, Grantham (Grantham congregation).

The volleyball team went 27-18, competing in the national Division III tournament. Named all-stars were senior Teresa Nichols, East Smithfield, and sophomore Lisa Burrows, Fortuna, Calif. Junior Naomi Paine, Grantham (Grantham congregation) also participated.

Junior Roy Swaisgood, Streetsboro, Ohio, became the first Messiah runner to be named All-American, as he finished 12th in the national NCAA Division III cross country meet held in Atlanta.

Also running in the national meet and finishing 50th out of 184 runners was junior Shylock Ndlovu, Zimbabwe (Grantham congregation). Senior Sheldon Cober, Mt. Joy, Pa. (Elizabethtown congregation), also contributed to the men's best-ever record of 16-3. Sophomore Tammy Walsh, Audubon, Pa., led the women to a 9-5 record.

"Feeling Alone and Helping Each Other"

Sitting around the table were a widow, a divorced mother, a single parent, two other single women, and three married women. The conversation topic of the moment was the experience of feeling alone and sometimes finding that no one in the church seems to know either what you're going through or how to help you. Listening to these women talk and thinking of my own experiences, I am convinced that feelings of aloneness even in the context of the church are more common than we realize.

For some people, aloneness is the result of a particular circumstance—widowhood, divorce, singleness, physical disability, being at home alone all day with small children, etc. The feelings of aloneness can also come when you're the only person to hold a particular conviction, when you're facing a personal problem that's difficult to talk about, or when you don't fit the stereotypes of what people think you are "supposed" to be. Whatever your reasons for feeling alone, sometimes it's very hard to let anyone know how you feel. And sometimes, when you do decide to try to talk about your feelings, the response you get makes you feel that few people really want to be bothered or know what to do with you.

I'm reminded of a paragraph in Galatians 6, in which there are two contradictory statements: "carry each other's burdens" (v. 2), and "each one should carry his [or her] own load" (v. 5). Maybe the point is that as Christians in "the family of believers" (v. 10), we each have a dual responsibility—for ourselves (to carry our own load) and for each other (to

carry each other's burdens). We can't expect others to do everything for us (to take care of us when we're feeling alone, for example) if we won't do for ourselves. On the other hand, we shouldn't expect others to handle their burdens by themselves.

I've wondered a lot about why we often do very poorly at helping people cope with the variety of circumstances that make them feel alone. I know lots of people who can testify to how well they were cared for during hard times, but I also know of others who find themselves going through extremely difficult things all alone. Why do we do so well at caring sometimes, but other times we fail?

I think there are a number of reasons. When someone is sick, we know what to do—visit, take in meals, babysit, pray for recovery, etc. But when a couple is having marital problems, for example, we often don't know how to help. We don't want to interfere in their business and we want to give them the chance to work things out in their own way and at their own pace. In such situations, however, many people feel alone and ignored, and are often too proud or embarrassed to admit their need.

Most people are fairly good at continuing to function normally even when they are hurting inside. In fact, I suppose that's a tribute to the human ability to function on more than one level at a time and to God's grace working in our lives, but I also think it's an indication of our great need to *appear* to be O.K. How many times do we answer "fine" to the typical Sunday morning question, "How are you?" even when we're really not fine at all? We don't want to appear to be anything other than "fine," especially when everyone else seems to be

"fine," and we wonder whether anyone really has the time or cares enough to listen. Besides, the Sunday morning structure usually doesn't allow for intense or prolonged conversation. We have a schedule to keep!

It seems to me that at least two things need to happen. On the one hand, when we are hurting and feeling alone (for whatever reasons), we need to be willing to let people know that we need them. That often feels like a risky thing to do, but how can anyone help if he or she doesn't know we need help? We also need to assume responsibility for those things we can do for ourselves. On the other hand, we need to work harder at being sensitive to when our sisters and brothers need us. We need to be willing to commit time to asking questions and listening and keeping in touch. This isn't a once-and-done kind of thing and will mean that we reach beyond our preoccupation with other concerns. We also need to risk being told that it's none of our business or that they really don't want to talk. At least we will show that we care and notice they are hurting. If we open ourselves up in this way, we may find that some will shirk their responsibility to "carry their own load" and will take advantage of us. We'll need to learn how to handle that. Perhaps some of us will also need to ask others to help when we begin to feel overloaded.

This is a tall order, I know, but I'm convinced that it has to happen for the church to "fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2). I know what it's like to feel alone; I know of others who also feel alone sometimes; and I believe we should be helping each other in whatever ways we can.

Phoebe

Pontius' Puddle

WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR

by PONTIUS

MAY OUR PONDS NOT TURN SCUMMY,
MAY FAT FLIES FILL OUR TUMMIES,
MAY THE ROCKS UPON WHICH WE SIT,
ALWAYS STAY SMOOTH AND SUNLIT,
MAY THOSE WITH WHOM WE LIVE,
LOVE, JOY, AND HAPPINESS GIVE,
MAY THE GOD WHO ART IN HEAVEN,
TOLERATE US TIL '87,

SO TO THOSE WHOM WE HOLD DEAR,
A VERY MERRY NEW YEAR,

BUT TO THOSE THAT WE DISLIKE,
MAY THEY —



PEACE ON EARTH TO ALL
GOD'S CREATURES IN 1986.

MMMPH!



Dear Paul,

Letter writing for me is something of a drag. It seems so remote. There are no voice inflections, no facial expressions, no touches, smiles, or hugs to give a letter the kind of depth I've come to expect in a visit with a friend.

But lately I'm changing my mind. Recently, when reading a copy of your letter "to all the saints in Philippi," it became apparent that those words flowed from your soul. That letter really touched me with your warmth and concern. So today, as I write to you, I find myself imagining that you are right here next to me in seat 18B. (I'm flying to Chicago today. Actually, the flight is a bit rough just now; I hope you can read my writing! Oh, I'm not complaining. This is certainly an improvement over your prison dungeon!)

I have a question, Paul. You see, New Year's Day has come and gone. Twentieth century North Americans find many different ways to celebrate the event. A few are thoughtful and given to reflecting on the passing of time and the uncertainty of the future. Most, however, seem intent on drowning such thoughts with alcohol and partying. It would appear from the letters you wrote that such carousing is nothing new to you. Corinth, Rome, and Athens must have been quite sophisticated and in many ways not unlike Chicago, Harrisburg, or Riverside.

Now, back to my question (and I guess it is not so much a question as it is

a thought) grows out of your statement in your letter to the "beloved of God in Rome." With apparent conviction you declared that in "all things God works for the good of those who love him who have been called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28). That is certainly a dramatic affirmation. It ought to put every Christian in a state of perfect rest. We should be able to stand at the portal of 1986 and confidently face the new year without flinching. But my dear esteemed brother, 1986 seems so full of uncertainties, so bristling with potential disasters of every kind. World turmoil, terrorism, the instability of international finance, not to mention braces or college for our children—we wonder how to apply Romans 8:28.

Let me check something with you, Paul. (I think I know your response. I only wish you were here in seat 18B so I could see the gleam of confidence in your eyes!) I suspect you could have made the Romans 8:28 statement very early in your journey—maybe even on the road out of Damascus after your friends "let you down easy" in a basket. After all, you had encountered God! He was light and power and he had graciously intersected your proud and destructive way, bringing marvelous transformation. The statement would have had *conviction* then. But the fact is, you wrote it *after* the rigors of service for the Master. Somehow it is not your conviction that shines through the statement as much as your *confidence* and *credibility*. You have been through "all things." You could write Romans 8:28 from experience and with powerful integrity.

Recently a friend told of an agonized family decision to move to the West to find work. The move seemed directed by the Lord, but involved considerable anguish and guilt because it took them away from his aging parents. The job opening happened to be close to the wife's parents who were healthy, active, and independent. Before long, however, the wife's parents experienced serious debilitating illness. They desperately needed their daughter and son-in-law. The husband's parents in the East, for whom they had so much concern, fared beautifully quite independent of their children, enjoying "the ten best years of their life." As my friend spoke, I sensed

the same thing I mentioned earlier about Romans 8:28. At the time of his family's move, he "knew" God was working things out for good. But now, some years later, his words to me had the full rich tone of credibility. He experienced Romans 8:28!

Here's what I am discovering, Paul: Every Christian is, of course, in touch with the Almighty. We *know* the verse and even quote Romans 8:28 to each other as we face the unknown year ahead. But some of us can look back, having actually lived one or more years—maybe even 50. We have a growing awareness that God has indeed been faithful, that he has given grace and strength and joy. We may still quote the verse, but our focus shifts from conviction to credibility—and credibility far surpasses conviction in effective communication.

Yes, 1986 has some frightening prospects. But if those of us who trusted God and *experienced* his "working for good" in the past will speak up, we can offer tremendous encouragement to others who are young or fainthearted or new in the faith. There is nothing more uplifting in the face of threat and danger than to have a fellow traveler who has been on the road before, graphically describe those times and events where God demonstrated his faithfulness. This adds credibility to conviction. Come to think of it, when you wrote Romans 8:28 you weren't "quoting a verse." You were testifying to a reality with powerful credibility!

Thanks, Paul. Just sitting here writing these things brings a sense of peace and confidence. And freeing my imagination to picture you in seat 18B made Chicago seem a lot closer than it ever did before.

Onesimus

Executive Director Sought

The Board for Media Ministries of the Brethren in Christ Church is searching for a person to serve in the capacity of Executive Director for the board. A business background is preferred.

Inquiries and/or resumes may be directed to Dwight Bert (Chairman of the Board), P.O. Box 216, Upland, CA 91785. Office telephone: (714) 981-8791; home telephone: (714) 985-9696.

Resumes should be mailed by January 25.

With the beginning of the new year comes a new writer for this column, Onesimus IV, as well as the "revealing" of the 1985 Onesimus—John Yeatts, a member of the religion faculty of Messiah College, Grantham, Pa.

Readers may correspond with both Phoebe and Onesimus by writing to them c/o the Evangelical Visitor, P.O. Box 166, Nappanee, IN 46550.

Agenda (or, things I have to do)

A non-scientific (and probably quite trivial) observation of mine: bureaucrats and others who spend a lot of their waking hours in committee meetings enjoy using the word "agenda." Ordinary folk talk instead of "things I (or we) have to do."

Of course, "agenda" is precisely the right term to identify the matters at hand on which a committee or board must make decisions. And the related term "hidden agenda" accurately describes issues or concerns in the mind of one or more persons in a group, but which are not present on the "formal agenda" available to all participants. Hidden agenda invariably colors discussion and influences decisions, but is hard to grapple with until it somehow is brought out into the open (or "onto the table," to use more committee jargon).

For some reason, the word "agenda" doesn't stay within the board room. In addition to talking about issues in society as "political agenda" or "social agenda," these committee-oriented persons seem compelled to speak of "family agenda" (we need to clean out the garage this weekend) and "personal agenda" (I want to lose five pounds this month). In one article I read this week, a church administrator wrote about God's agenda and another person's own spiritual agenda as he urged readers to adopt as a goal speaking to one unchurched person each week. (A very worth-while goal, I might add.)

* * *

Before declaring a personal moratorium on the use of "agenda" outside of actual committee processes, I'll note here just a few of the agenda items on the editor's desk.

The task force assigned to prepare a doctrinal restatement for the Brethren in Christ Church recently had its first meeting. We agreed that this is a process which will require careful biblical study and prayer, on the part of both the task force members and the church at large. More word about this study will appear in the *Visitor* and in communications to pastors in the coming months.

The survey conducted some time ago by the Board for Brotherhood Concerns and summarized in last month's *Visitor* (see "Whatever happened to the survey?", Dec., pp. 10-13) will help to shape some of the themes of the magazine in 1986. The top ten concerns identified by survey respondents were: developing family relationships, caring for the aged, drug and alcohol abuse, world hunger and food production, sexual promiscuity, foster care ministries, poverty, abortion, ethnic/minority concerns, and pornography. (Coincidentally, other articles in the December issue touched on at least five of these ten

topics, as well as other concerns highlighted in the survey.)

Also on the '86 *Visitor* agenda is some work on the Church News department. We plan to prepare some new guidelines for pastors and congregational correspondents to use in submitting items for publication. One of the important guidelines will be that of sending in items promptly. This issue, like several recent issues, carries reports of events which happened six months or more ago, yet we just received the information in time for publication in this January issue.

* * *

One of the other things I must do as 1986 begins is to adapt to the absence of Donna Soliday, who was on the staff of Evangel Press for nearly 15 years. She and her husband Dave are now in language study in Quebec, preparing to begin missions service in Haiti this summer.

Donna was usually the first person you talked with when you called or visited Evangel Press. In addition to serving as receptionist, she was my secretary, compiled the Church News section of the *Visitor*, and cared for all the magazine's subscription and mailing list details.

Donna was one of the key people who made my move from the missions office in Elizabethtown, Pa., to the editor's office in Nappanee an easy and pleasant transition. She will be missed here, but the Solidays will be a great asset to the work of missions in the Caribbean.

* * *

Back to the idea of God having an agenda. I doubt if Jesus would have used the term when he stood up in the synagogue in Nazareth and read from Isaiah 61. (Part of my doubt comes from my having difficulty seeing Jesus spending much time in committee sessions.) Nevertheless, as I begin the new year, I want to pay close attention to what one of my college professors called Jesus' "inaugural address":

The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom
for the prisoners
and the recovery of sight for the blind,
to release the oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.
(Luke 4:18-19)

Please join with me in trying to make this passage an integral part of everything we plan to do (our "agenda," if you insist) in this new year of 1986. G

The Contemporary Scene

Penthouse, Playboy blame circulation losses on NFD

Tupelo, Miss. (EP)—*Penthouse* and *Playboy* magazines have both suffered serious circulation drops, and both attribute the drops to efforts by the National Federation for Decency, according to a report in NFD Journal.

The report cites an article in *Advertising Age*, which said, "*Playboy's* current 4,202,324 circulation is far below the 7.2 million it claimed at its peak in 1972. *Penthouse's* circulation, which peaked at 4,711,849 in 1979, now stands at 3,200,863 . . . Executives from both magazines say these circulation drops are in large part a result of boycotts by groups, such as the National Federation for Decency, that have lobbied to prevent distribution of the magazines at convenience stores."

NFD reports that single copy sales, in stores such as 7-Eleven, account for 93 percent of all sales for *Penthouse*, and nearly 40 percent of *Playboy's* distribution. NFD estimates that sale of pornographic magazines brings 7-Eleven an annual profit of \$30 million.

Court lets controversial zoning ordinance stand

Washington, D.C. (EP)—The U.S. Supreme Court on Dec. 9 let stand a Medford, Oregon zoning ordinance which requires churches to get special zoning permits to operate grade schools.

First Assembly of God in Medford argued that the city should not have jurisdiction over a church program, and that allowing such jurisdiction violated the separation of church and state.

The dispute began five years ago when the church refused to apply for an additional use permit for a parochial school it runs in church buildings. The church said if the city was allowed to regulate one aspect of the church ministry, it would be allowed to regulate others, including Sunday School.

'Silent Scream' sequel planned

New York, N.Y. (EP)—Dr. Bernard Nathanson, a former abortion clinic director who narrated "The Silent Scream" has announced plans to make a follow-up film. Nathanson said the new film will be "graphic in the extreme," and may include an interview with a girl who survived a saline abortion he performed on her mother.

Nathanson said he performed a saline abortion that resulted in the live birth in the middle to late '60's. In this procedure, a saline solution is injected into the womb, causing the fetus to be expelled through labor. Nathanson said his interview with the girl was "staggering."

"I think the interest is obvious," he told the Associated Press. "This is a unique experience for a human being. How many people do you know walking around like that?" An estimated one

percent of saline abortions result in live births.

Nathanson said the film would also include supporting witnesses of the abortion performed in "The Silent Scream," which was released December 1984. "It's regrettable we've had to do it this way," he said. "We were forced because of the fabrication, the innuendo by the pro-abortion people after the last film."

"The Silent Scream" fueled the national controversy over abortion with its ultrasound images of a fetus being aborted. Abortion advocates attacked the film as misleading propaganda.

Study finds textbooks are biased against Christianity

New York, N.Y. (EP)—Public school textbooks are biased against religion and traditional values, according to a study by Paul C. Vitz, a New York University psychology professor.

Vitz reviewed dozens of textbooks commonly used in public schools and found that "public school textbooks present a very biased representation of both religion and of many traditional values."

Among 40 social studies textbooks for grades 1-4, "not one . . . had one word of text that referred to any religious activity representative of contemporary American life," said the report. Vitz was joined on the project by other professors, including Donald Oppewal of Calvin College.

Oppewal contrasted the treatment of religion with information about sex in health books. He quoted one text which said, "Although homosexual acts have traditionally been categorized as deviant or unnatural, there is no evidence that they are any more or less so than heterosexual acts."

The report also said that in several sixth-grade world history or world culture texts, "Mohammed's life gets much more coverage than that of Jesus."

Didn't get your December Visitor?

In the process of computerizing the *Visitor* mailing list, we experienced some difficulties in addressing the December issue.

Some subscribers may have received duplicate copies (probably one with a computer address, one with the older stencil type address). In that event, please give the extra copy to a friend, or put an extra layer of paper in your birdcage the next time you clean it.

However, if you did not receive your December copy (and your subscription is "paid up"), please contact our office. We have some extra copies, and will send one to you posthaste, with our apologies.